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**CRICKET WRITING CULTURE:
HOW THE INTERWAR WORKS OF J.M. KILBURN
FOR *THE YORKSHIRE POST* TRANSCENDED THE
BOUNDARY BETWEEN 'JOURNALISM' AND
'LITERATURE'.**

JOSEPH ANDREW SMITH

A thesis submitted to the University of Huddersfield in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of Master's by Research.

The University of Huddersfield

September 2015

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Abstract

In many ways one of the most innovative writers of his age, the interwar work of the cricket writer, J.M. Kilburn, for *The Yorkshire Post* was so unique that it transcended the boundary between 'journalism' and 'literature'.

His brand of writing pushed the definition of 'journalism' to a point where journalistic traits were lost; in its place he used literary styles and techniques, allowing for the application of literary analysis to an art form which Kilburn made his own between 1934 and 1939.

This is a study of his work as Yorkshire (and England) cricket correspondent for *The Yorkshire Post* from across the six seasons before the outbreak of the Second World War, a time of great political, social and cultural upheaval, but also one of unmitigated success, on a sporting front, for the White Rose.

It is argued in this thesis that Kilburn, in transcending the boundary between literature and journalism, actually created a hybrid genre – a form of writing created out of styles pulled from the literary and journalistic worlds, and mixed together to create something unique to Kilburn.

His career began with the kind of flourish that would grace his writing over a forty-year tenure working for *The Yorkshire Post*, one of the largest publications in the country: cricket writing commendation from the great Sir Neville Cardus – the man seen as the most influential in the history of cricket writing – imbued onto Kilburn a status of high quality which he would always keep.

A bookworm childhood complimented by many hours sat on the boundary edge of Yorkshire cricket grounds ensured the foundations of Kilburn's unique trade were well ingrained; a year spent roaming Finland polished his descriptive skills, and the posting of his travel pieces during this time endeared him to *The Yorkshire Post's* then-editor Arthur Mann, whose vision it was to have as his chief cricket writer a man who could couple sound judgment with an ability to carry his readers from their living room to the field of play using only the elegance of the written word as a means of transportation.

For example, Kilburn uses what Roland Barthes describes as a 'narrative luxury' (in Furst, 1992, pp135-136) in his writing – a technique used by literary figures – as well as using characterisation by taking individual players and creating mythological, almost godlike figures out of them. His style echoes that of a generation of writers which Hynes (1976) labels as 'the Auden generation', a group whose prose goes beyond what has been seen before, to transform the written word out of a passive state and into an active role, tackling the era's various cultural crisis.

During the more-than four decades he spent writing for *The Yorkshire Post*, Kilburn was never tempted away to a larger, national title like many of his contemporaries. His name is not nearly as well known as the likes of Sir Neville Cardus, R.C. Robertson-Glasgow or E.W. Swanton, all of whom were active during the majority of his career, but Kilburn's unique disregard for his profession's conventions made him one of the most interesting cricket writers of all time. This is the story of his early, interwar career at *The Yorkshire Post*.

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Thanks to MC, BL and AS for helping negotiate a sticky wicket, PG and DG for 121 years of cricket history, and many thanks to BR – for everything else.

In September 2014, the month when work began on this study, Yorkshire County Cricket Club won the County Championship title for the first time in 13 years. In September 2015, the month of this study's completion, Yorkshire regained their title. It seems apt that the last time a Yorkshire team achieved such a feat was in 1967 and 1968, under the watchful eye of J.M. Kilburn.



J.M. Kilburn, *The Yorkshire Post*

A taste of Kilburn

The best way to appreciate this study is to have prior experience of J.M Kilburn's writing style. Therefore, ahead of the thesis, I present here three selected extracts:

[Herbert] Sutcliffe holds so many records that he who knows not this player's reputation knows nothing of cricket. To watch one of Sutcliffe's innings is to have complete understanding of his power. He always seems to me rather to hurry to the wicket, everlastingly anxious to be batting and eager to test the quality of a bat which looks brand-new every time he opens an innings. Nine times out of ten the first ball will be outside the off-stump, and just so often will Sutcliffe step across, bring his feet together with military precision, lift that beautiful bat high out of harm's way and gaze past point as the ball thuds into the wicket-keeper's gloves.

This padding-up announces as clearly as spoken words: 'My dear bowler, you are wasting your time: I am proposing to make a century to-day and I am certainly not going to jeopardize my chances by feeling for anything outside the off-stump.' The bowler is invariably heedless, but when Sutcliffe performs precisely the same operation at half-past five in the afternoon scepticism begins to depart.

J.M. Kilburn, In Search of Cricket, 1937, pp54-55

In recent years the cricket ground at Edgbaston has been of somewhat forlorn appearance. The glories of other years when Test match history was made here faded and linger only on photographs in the long room of the pavilion. An air of antimacassar and faded tapestry hung everywhere. Now transformation has taken place; the brightness that need never be absent from first-class cricket is plain for all to see. Fresh paint shines upon stands and railings, striped sunshades sparkle above tea tables in a garden corner, and catering is positively luxurious with the addition of a snack bar that is tempting in its very appearance and absorbing in its contents.

J.M. Kilburn, The Yorkshire Post, June 9, 1938. The first paragraph of the match report for the Warwickshire v Yorkshire County Championship match at Edgbaston, Birmingham.

This scandal of a summer played its most irritating prank upon us to-day. When the skies are unrelievedly grey and the rain falls without cease we can resign ourselves to loss of cricket and go promptly home to fireside (or go wherever our uncricketing interests lie), but when half the afternoon offers brilliant sunshine, and still there is no play, the woes of Tantalus can no further go.

...

The first threat of interruption came from growing thunder and when [Albert] Alderman had been stumped at one o'clock with the total at 50 the players were driven to shelter. The rain, well satisfied, immediately ceased and there was play for a further ten minutes before lunch.

This, apparently, was taken by the elements as a direct challenge, and during the interval the storm broke tremendously. Cricket having thus been put beside the question for the afternoon there came sunshine and not until ten minutes to four when the players came boldly from the pavilion did the skies darken again. Before ever a ball could be bowled rain fell once more but there was damp defiance while first [Hedley] Verity and then [Bill] Bowes bowled an over. Bowes had [Denis] Smith caught at the wicket, and Derbyshire were 61 for two. The rainfall grew tempestuous and insisted upon cessation. The players bowed to the storm. There was immediate sunshine.

This time, though, there could be no return. Inspection was made at quarter past five and quarter to six but the day's cricket was done. What a rogue and peasant slave is man.

J.M. Kilburn, The Yorkshire Post, July 17, 1939. The first and last paragraphs of the first-day County Championship match report between Yorkshire and Derbyshire at Chesterfield.

'It is a pleasant fancy... that cricketers are products of their own environment and grow as they do grow because of the impulse in their setting.'

J.M. Kilburn, *In Search of Cricket*, 1937, p9

'At most first-class matches to-day a scorecard is an absolute necessity, for even bowling methods have become abominably stereotyped.'

J.M. Kilburn, *In Search of Cricket*, 1937, p54

'... a task [was] clearly before them, and that was to make as many runs as possible in the fleeting minutes during which the wicket slept quiescent beneath the hypnotism of the heavy roller.'

J.M. Kilburn, *The Yorkshire Post*, June 4, 1935

Introduction

After the death of Sir Neville Cardus, seen as the most influential cricket writer in the sport's history, Alan Gibson wrote in the 1976 edition of *Wisden* that 'there is no need to recite his achievement' – Cardus's career works, stretching back to 1917, had already done that for him. Gibson acknowledged that Cardus 'changed the course of the writing of cricket', that he 'dignified and illuminated the craft' (in Green, 1984, pp903-905), and Bateman (2009, p6) described him as cricket writing's 'Shakespeare figure'. Without committing to the thousands of words which could quite comfortably be said of Cardus and his cricketing influences, these words highlight his importance within sporting, and literary, spheres. There is a pedigree which comes with the name 'Cardus' that makes a very specific letter he wrote just after the Whit weekend of 1934 all the more demonstrative of the intended recipient's talents.

It was during that very same weekend when an aspiring twenty-four-year-old was writing his first cricket match report for publication in *The Yorkshire Post*. His name was James Maurice Kilburn and he was attending his second match of a three-month probationary period with the newspaper, hoping to be appointed as the publication's new cricket correspondent. He had already been sent to Ilkeston as a sort of trial run, having been asked to write about the match being played there between Derbyshire and Lancashire. His reports from Ilkeston made an impression back at the office, and he was duly tasked with covering the most important match of the season: Yorkshire versus Lancashire, to be played on Whit weekend at Bramall Lane in Sheffield (Kilburn, 1972, Hopps, 1993, Hamilton, 2008).

'I sat on the back row of the Press box at Bramall Lane,' Kilburn wrote, nearly four decades later (1972, p24), 'armed with a copy-pad and a pencil supplied by the office, spoke only when I was spoken to and described the cricket as it appeared to me.' A time before even telephoned copy-taking – and when press-telegramming was used only for distant matches – Kilburn had to travel from Sheffield to the Leeds offices to deliver his hand-written copy, before journeying halfway back again, to his Barnsley home (Kilburn, 1972).

Kilburn's probationary appointment was designed with geography in mind – for this period he had only to attend home and close-to-home games, and given that Yorkshire travelled to Birmingham after their Whit weekend Roses match, he was to spend the next days in the office. His office presence was well received as Kilburn was congratulated for a successful early contribution to the newspaper, however, a reader's letter had been received by the editor, and Kilburn was asked to acknowledge it himself. 'The letter,' Kilburn wrote (1972, p25), 'was a generous tribute to the *Yorkshire Post* correspondent at the Lancashire match, with an apology for not knowing his name. The writer was Neville Cardus.'

This is a study of the cricket writing of J.M. Kilburn for *The Yorkshire Post* between 1934 and 1939. His works during this period, this study argues, transcended the boundary between what constitutes 'journalism' and what constitutes 'literature', to the point where Kilburn creates for himself a unique 'hybrid' – a form of writing created using styles and techniques from the worlds of both journalism and literature, though whose stylistic ratio slightly favours 'literature'.

Anthony Bateman, whose *Cricket, Literature and Culture* (2009) was a major source of inspiration for this study, has already established how Neville Cardus, 'more than any other cricket writer... has become a construct who transcends the fields of 'cricket Literature' and 'literature' to become a component of the national culture' (p95). Bateman notes how Cardus even had two cricket essays included 'in two English prose textbooks for schools' (2009, p95) – and this study outlines how Kilburn is similar. It should be noted, however, that this does literally mean that Kilburn was only *similar* to Cardus; certainly not the same. What is argued here is that his writing, specifically between 1934 and 1939, transcended the boundary between 'journalism' and 'literature', there is no suggestion that he, as Cardus did, 'became a component of the national culture'. This is perhaps because Kilburn never left *The Yorkshire Post*. He spent over forty years with the newspaper as their cricket correspondent (Kilburn, 1972, Hopps, 1993, Hamilton, 2008), always failing to be tempted away to a national title, and was thus perhaps obscured somewhat from the wider nation's eye.

However, that did not stop Kilburn from making an impact in Yorkshire. Upon receiving the letter of commendation from now-fellow cricket writer Neville Cardus after the Whit weekend Roses match between Yorkshire and Lancashire, Kilburn noted how 'decree went forth that I should thereafter attend all Yorkshire's matches, home and away, under the by-line of Our Cricket Correspondent' (1972, p25). He was also trusted with 'expanding or contracting daily reports on my own estimate of the cricket's significance' (Kilburn, 1972, p25). Kilburn's mark was made so quickly that 'by Our Cricket Correspondent' was soon replaced with 'by J.M. Kilburn' – during his early, interwar career, Kilburn's was often the only by-line in the entire newspaper (Hamilton, 2008).

For Kilburn, it seems as though the conditions for his fledgling career were all very much in his favour. He was a young, aspiring writer, given his first permanent writing job thanks to an editor who was willing to gamble on a twenty-four-year-old 'without any technical knowledge or proprietorial influence' of the newspaper industry (Kilburn, 1972, p23, Hamilton, 2008). By his own admission, 'the rawness of this new recruit was exceptional' (Kilburn, 1972, p23).

This chance came Kilburn's way thanks to a, seemingly ultimately decisive, 'tiny and local reputation in descriptive writing' (Kilburn, 1972, p23) gained from a short period spent travelling in Finland. Kilburn regularly sent his descriptive tales for publication in *The Yorkshire Post* and the weekly newspaper in Barnsley (Kilburn, 1972, p23, Hopps, 1993, Hamilton, 2008), so it was no surprise to the editor, Arthur Mann, when Kilburn brought to

his cricket writing a sense of the literary; a form of description outside the norms of, to borrow an Orwellian phrase, 'newspeak'. In the third, small quotation immediately preceding the introduction, Kilburn brings life to the inanimate by describing the wicket as having 'slept quiescent beneath the hypnotism of the heavy roller', for example. In doing so, he is not only bringing 'character' to the players on the field – outlined in depth later in the study – but is also giving the players an earthly challenge, much in the same way J.R.R. Tolkien has his hobbits clambering over monolithic mountain ranges and Stephen King drags his 'Gunslinger' over rock faces 'rising in cyclopean, tumbled splendour' (1982, p100) as part of their epic fantasy novels.

These are two key aspects of this study: the fact that Kilburn was not naturally a journalist – he saw himself, as evidenced by his time in Finland spent creating pieces of descriptive writing, as a *writer* rather than a journalist. Also, he, by his own admission, 'knew nothing of the process in newspaper production, he could neither type nor write shorthand and he was not gifted with the slightest sense of news-value' (Kilburn, 1972, p23). Yet this did not hinder him in creating a career working for a newspaper for over forty years, from 1934 until 1976 (Hopps, 1993, *The Times*, 1993, Hamilton, 2008). He is also very fondly remembered, and very well-respected within the journalism world. Duncan Hamilton published *Sweet Summers* (2008), a collection of Kilburn's best pieces from right across his four-decade tenure with *The Yorkshire Post*, and at the end are many pages of tributes from former colleagues, all of whom describe a man not too dissimilar to that of the 24-year-old who sat quietly at the back of the Bramall Lane press box to cover his first match for the newspaper.

There are two big differences, however, between the young Kilburn and the old. The first difference was amended after Kilburn handed in that very first report from the Whit weekend Roses match. At the office, the newspaper's compositors found the pencil Kilburn had written in too light to be deciphered comfortably; he was to write in ink from then on (Kilburn, 1972). Most of Kilburn's *Sweet Summers* tributes mention how he was the last bastion of the fountain pen in the press box. David Frith, now one of cricket's most renowned writers, wrote how, in 1968, he was once given the task of delivering Kilburn's copy to the newspaper's London offices – there was no such rushing around for Kilburn by this stage of his career – and recalled how Kilburn was 'the last journalist to write his copy with a fountain-pen, creating the same sort of broad sweeps of script as his Victorian predecessors' (in Hamilton, 2008, p330).

The second difference was very much a stylistic one, as the general consensus among the tribute-writers (in Hamilton, 2008, pp328-347) was that Kilburn was a very perceptive, authoritative writer, who had the capacity to throw in a line of elegance as and when was needed. However, all of these recollections of Kilburn tend to range from the 1950s onwards. Dickie Bird, for example, was one of Kilburn's closest friends, meeting him for the first time as a fifteen-year old at the Yorkshire team's net practice – Kilburn made a habit of attending pre-season practices, Bird suggesting in his tribute that it was Kilburn's 'homework for the forthcoming season, building up a word picture in his mind of each of the players and some of their idiosyncrasies' (in Hamilton, 2008, p328). Bird was, however, only born in 1933, a year before Kilburn began working on *The Yorkshire Post*, making the date of his very first meeting with someone who would become a lifelong friend as late as the year 1948.

It is only through his very popular *In Search of Cricket* (1937) that any of Kilburn's interwar work has remained in the nation's eye, the book being Kilburn's first published, and a collection of some of his favourite early writings for *The Yorkshire Post*. Although he is not the only one to mention *In Search of Cricket*, Matthew Engel is the only tribute-writer in *Sweet Summers* to make a specific reference to Kilburn's early writing as different from his later work. He proposes that *In Search of Cricket* (1937) was 'THE' cricket book of the era, that 'there is a freshness about it that could only come from a young writer' (Engel, in Hamilton, 2008, p346). He goes on to say that his early work is 'like a Yorkshire innings, full of textbook defensive shots leavened with the occasional perfectly-executed cover-drive... This represents masterful control of the language' (in Hamilton, 2008, p346). It is this use of the 'cover-drive' by an enthusiastic, youthful, self-confessed journalism-ignorant *writer* which is analysed on the following pages.

We start first by viewing the larger picture, a concept or topic, such as 'journalism' and 'literature', and explain why the interwar writing of J.M. Kilburn fits (or does not fit, in the case of 'journalism') into such a category, before concentrating our attention on more and more specific ideas. After the more general concepts of, for example, the definition of 'literature' and the styles of 'journalism' have been addressed, focus is concentrated on specific examples of Kilburn's work – the way he uses geographical groupings for certain brands of cricket, for example – until, in the last section of this study, we analyse how Kilburn uses just one player – Herbert Sutcliffe – as an ideological cultural symbol.

As has already been hinted at, a key concept of this study revolves around how Kilburn viewed himself as a *writer* rather than a journalist. Therefore there is a need to know about

the personal background of the man himself in order to fully appreciate his ways as a cricket writer early in his career. Before the main content of the study commences, the writing career of Kilburn is outlined, as well as an overview of Sir Neville Cardus's career. This study's very first paragraph alluded to Cardus's effect on the wider cricket writing profession, but it will become apparent how he had a specific influence on Kilburn himself – which makes his receiving a letter of commendation from the man after his very first published report all the more impressive. There is also a brief description of Alfred Pullin. He was Kilburn's long-standing cricket writing predecessor at *The Yorkshire Post*, having written for the newspaper since the late nineteenth century, right up until 1931 (Allison, 2004, Hopps, 1993, Hamilton, 2008). He, too, played a significant role, for although he may never have even met Kilburn – he died in 1934 – a young, cricket-mad Kilburn would have undoubtedly seen his writing in the newspaper, whilst Pullin's writing itself showed signs of the evolution which took place both within the wider newspaper industry over the course of his career (Williams, 1997, Harcup, 2004), and the stylistic avenues down which then-editor Arthur Mann wanted to take *The Yorkshire Post*.

Holes in the Field: A Literature Review

Cricket, generally, has a healthy volume of research dedicated to it. As a sport it has plenty to offer researchers – it is a game with a long and rich history. Be it in the form of an activity rife with skulduggery, associated with gambling and seen as a pursuit of the lower classes to becoming an important part of cultural society and a means of educating schoolboys the values of manhood (Woodward, 1962, Sandiford, 1994, Birley, 1999, Bateman, 2009), in every era cricket appears it is entwined within the period's culture in one way or another.

According to Woodward (1962), cricket was already a national game by 1815, though its history is traced, in detail, centuries beforehand by Birley (1999), who recalls a similarly violent, gambling-rife occupation in the seventeenth century as does Woodward for the first half of the nineteenth century. It was only when the sport became further established within the upper-middle classes, throughout the nineteenth century, that this image began to change (Woodward, 1962, Sandiford, 1994, Birley, 1999, Bateman, 2009). This particularly important transition for cricket is detailed in Sandiford's *Cricket and the Victorians* (1994). 'A spectacular sports explosion took place in Britain after 1850', noted Sandiford (1994, p34), as part of the wider growth in leisure during the Victorian period. The reasons for which such an increase in leisure occurred during this time is widely covered – increases in wages, reduced working hours, improved public transport infrastructure etc. – but Sandiford observes that, whilst the Victorians 'obviously enjoyed' (p34) their new-found leisurely

lifestyle, the very idea of sport, games and play was potentially disturbing to the Victorian status-quo. He notes that to 'some bourgeois minds, the sports explosion was a threat to social cohesion since it blurred the distinctions between the elite and the masses' (p34). However, thanks, in part, to a royal endorsement, sport and leisure overcame its earlier difficulties to become seen as having a positive influence on society (Sandiford, 1994).

This, of course, features in some of cricket's more general social histories, the most well known of which is probably Birley's *A Social History of English Cricket* (1999), which chronicles the history of the game in immense detail right from its 'uncertain' beginnings 'some time in the latter Middle Ages' (p3), right up until the end of the twentieth century. Others, like Sandiford, focus on particular periods, such as Jack Williams's *Cricket and England: A Cultural and Social History of the Inter-war Years* (1999). These works tend to offer more detail on their era's central cricketing and cultural discussions, such as, in Williams's case, issues of class, gender, religion and sportsmanship – a particularly delicate topic throughout the interwar years. Williams notes how former Warwickshire captain Frank Foster wrote in 1930 that 'the word cricket means Sportsmanship', and how increased use of the expression 'it's not cricket'... shows how cricket had become a metaphor for honesty, selflessness and upright conduct' (p74), which was particularly interesting when England embarked on the infamous 'Bodyline' tour to Australia. The cabled conversation between the MCC (Marylebone Cricket Club) and the Australian cricketing authorities is detailed in its entirety in cricket's own most famous literary name: *Wisden*. In the 1980s, cricket historian Benny Green published a fantastic collection of *Wisden* anthologies, chronicling the game's major events as seen by the book between 1864 and 1982 – the 'Bodyline' incident is featured in the collection's second volume.

The *Wisden* series is, of course, not of an 'academic' nature, but it does represent the healthy state of 'non-academic' works on the game. Cricket, like no other sport, has an abundance of anthologies dedicated to writings on it. From the many journalists publishing collections of their own works, like Kilburn's *In Search of Cricket* (1937), Sir Neville Cardus's myriad of works throughout the twentieth century, Ray Robinson's *After Stumps Were Drawn* (1986), Mike Atherton's *Glorious Summers and Discontents* (2011), Gideon Haigh's *Ashes 2011* (2011) and many, many more, to anthologies of others' writings from throughout the sport's history: *Cardus on Cricket* (2000), collected and collated by Sir Rupert Hart-Davis; *Sweet Summers: The classic cricket writing of JM Kilburn* (2008), edited by Duncan Hamilton; *The Highlights: Frank Keating* (2014), edited by Matthew Engel; *Cricket: A Modern Anthology* (2013), edited by Jonathan Agnew; it is clear that cricket's followers have created a market for historical, nostalgic writings on the sport, and brings to

mind Matthew Engel's words in writing the foreword to the 1990 edition of Kilburn's *In Search of Cricket* (1937), when he suggests that it 'has become rather fashionable to read cricket reports and essays of the 1930s' (p1).

One of the most recent cricket anthologies on the market is Agnew's *Cricket: A Modern Anthology* (2013), which includes writings from as recently as Christopher Martin-Jenkins's *CMJ: A Cricketing Life* (2012), to Ray Robinson's *The Wildest Tests* (1972) to R.C. Robertson-Glasgow's *46 Not Out* (1948) to a piece entitled 'The Present Discontents' by Neville Cardus (p460), written in 1923. Not one piece is accompanied by a blurb written by the editor, for each stands alone, creating its own context and therefore mirroring other literary forms that traditionally sit within anthologies such as poems or short stories. Gideon Haigh's *Sphere of Influence* (2010) is a particularly good example of a cricket book within which the author has analysed a culture as it has been shaped by cricket, in this case how modern-day cricket in the sub-continent – specifically in India with the relatively recent formation of the twenty-over Indian Premier League competition – is now governed by money and politics. The sport even now has a quarterly journal dedicated to it. Although not 'academic' journals, the editorial content of *The Nightwatchman*, which focuses on historical and cultural aspects of the sport, is evidence of the wider public now taking an interest in sports and cultural history.

This study, however, concerns cricket, journalism and literature, and whilst most cricket histories, such as those written by Birley and Williams, do have some mention of the cricketing press, all only mention in passing. This is where the work of Anthony Bateman is different. His *Cricket, Literature and Culture* (2009) is entirely devoted to the game of cricket and the written word, be it in the form of the cricket writing itself, for example in analysing the writing of Sir Neville Cardus, or in the form of wider literature and the sport, such as in highlighting James Joyce's bizarre use of cricketing pun and metaphor in a sexual scene within *Finnegans Wake* (1939). In fact, it was Bateman's work – specifically his chapters regarding Cardus ("Neville Cardus and Cultural Crisis", pp94-119) – which was the inspiration for this study, namely because Bateman outlined new ways in which cricket and 'literature' shared a relationship.

The difference between Bateman's *Cricket, Literature and Culture* (2009) and this study is in the journalism. A lot of Bateman's work considers wider 'literature' and cricket's representations within it, with Cardus left as the only newspaperman whose career works are analysed in any great depth from a *journalistic* angle. Whilst putting the main focus on Cardus makes sense, given that Cardus is history's most famous cricket writer, it raised the

question about other cricket writers of the era: was Cardus a one-off, or was he a part of – or the start of – a wider movement towards a literary style within cricket writing? The decision to study J.M. Kilburn was confirmed when Bateman (2009, pp74-76) wrote that the 'close affinity between much interwar cricket literature and ruralist writings enabled professional journalists... to masquerade as disinterested belletrists and dissociate their branch of sports journalism from its economic imperatives' – especially since, to prove this, he used the example of Kilburn's 1937 book *In Search of Cricket*. After having implied that the work of Kilburn was indeed along the same stylistic literary lines as Cardus, Bateman's *Cricket, Literature and Culture* (2009) examined Kilburn's work no more, instead focusing on the writer hailing from the Manchester side of the Pennines (Cardus). However, this represented an opportunity: Kilburn had been identified as having a similar stylistic agenda to the great Neville Cardus; Cardus himself had recognised the talent of Kilburn in sending a letter of commendation after his very first published report for *The Yorkshire Post*; and yet Kilburn, unlike Cardus, never wrote for a national title, rendering him a somewhat unknown, or forgotten about, quantity.

Cricket was also a very important aspect of 1930s Yorkshire society and the significance of it was very much evident to Kilburn during the early part of his career. During the decade Yorkshire won seven of nine county championship titles, with attendances averaging around 8,000 per day's play throughout that period, and topping the 20,000 mark for matches of extra importance (England or Roses matches, for example) (Kilburn, 1972). The importance of the Yorkshire team to its public during this time was recalled by Kilburn in *Thanks to Cricket* (1972). He notes that there were the members of the club who devoutly watched every day's play, first ball to last, rain or shine, and those who worked, who were so desperate to see their county in action that they would attend only the day's evening sessions or even just attend over the course of their lunch break to catch a glimpse of their heroes. This also gave a greater importance to Kilburn's work, as the source for tens of thousands of fans to read about their team.

This meant that, alongside adding to the growing collection of cultural sports history research, this study is also contributing to the media studies field – which could be included under the wider 'cultural history' umbrella. The first example of academics looking into what exactly the ingredients were that combined to create 'news' came in 1965, thanks to Galtung and Ruge's interpretation of 'news values', with many developing the theme such as Stuart Hall's work in the late twentieth century to those more recent adaptations, such as Harcup and O'Neill (2001), Harrison (2006) and Brighton and Foy's *News Values* (2007), the

latter suggesting that we should go as far as forgetting all preconceptions of what we have thought of as 'news' and consider a whole new concept.

Press history has also dedicated to it plenty of material, one of the most well-known being Kevin Williams's *Get Me A Murder A Day* (1997), which analyses in great depth and detail the rise of the newspaper and its switch in content from long reels of political commentary to, for example, sport and crime, hence the famous saying of Lord Northcliffe – responsible for the 'Northcliffe revolution' – used as the title of his book. Asa Briggs and Peter Burke's *A Social History of the Media* (2009) is a publication which covers the media as a whole, from the invention of the printing press to the internet. They analyse the media's evolution from printed word to the digital age, but also acknowledge that written communications within cultures stretch as far back as the ancients Greece and Rome, and note that we only began to refer to the media, in a similar way as we do today, as late as the early-to-mid-nineteenth century. In a book as detailed regarding the history of the media as theirs, it is surprising that there is not more content concerning sport, especially since they acknowledge that sports 'must now figure prominently in any long-term account of global media history' (p300), given its importance to society.

There are also media studies with specific sporting flavours, such as Whannel's *Media Sports Stars* (2002), and Andrews and Jackson's collection of works regarding the cultural politics of sporting celebrities, *Sport Stars* (2001). Both give accounts of the celebrity sports star acting as a cultural symbol, and where in relation to society and culture they sit as signs, be it in the form of role models, heroes or scapegoats. Smart's *The Sports Star* (2005) similarly presents a range of the broad central discussions of celebrity status, fame and heroism, but the thing that seems to continuously link sports and media histories around the turn of the nineteenth-twentieth century was one, very famous, man: W.G. Grace.

Grace's celebrity status was evidenced, for A.G. Steel writing in the *Wisden* of 1895 (and quoted from the *Wisden Anthology* edited by Benny Green for the period 1864-1900), by the 'enormous success' of his MCC testimonial, which proved that 'the personality of W.G. Grace had taken a deep hold upon all classes of the English people' (p962). Not only that, 'S.H.P.' – in writing Grace's obituary for the *Wisden* of 1915 (and quoted from the *Wisden Anthology* edited by Benny Green for the period 1900-1940) – speaks of the man's 'global fame' (p448), and in the same anthology, in listing his career achievements, it is noted that in the list of 'subscribers' to Grace's testimonial cheque, presented to him in front of the Lord's pavilion in 1879, was headed first by the MCC, and secondly by 'HRH the Prince of Wales' (p470). Steel also acknowledged Grace's popularity as a first of its kind in a sporting

context: 'The enthusiasm was such as has probably never before been kindled concerning the exponent of any modern form of athletics' (p962).

A major reason for this was that Grace's cricketing career was timed perfectly to coincide with the wider boom of the British popular press (Williams, 1997). The expansion of circulation and the newspapers' shift from producing material on 'independent political comment' to 'crime, scandal, romance and sport' (Williams, 1997, p47) came at a time when Grace was creating his own 'heroic figure' through his exploits on the cricket field, whilst at the same time his off-field 'commercial sensibility' aided in his '[personifying] some of the forces at work producing the new professionalised elite spectator sport' (Whannel, 2002, p82).

In the contradiction between his amateur status and professionalised manner he embodied the contradictions between tradition and modernity, fair play and ruthless competitiveness, authority and rebellion, technique and flair that continue to be the discursive sub-structure of so much sporting representation (Whannel, 2002, p82).

Grace was the glue that stuck together sporting celebrity and the newly-emerging sporting press, and gave the possibility that a sporting celebrity could carry with them representations of ideologies, values and even debates, simply because of their widespread fame.

Grace was certainly a character and famous celebrity of his time but Kilburn, as is outlined later in the study, created his own celebrities out of players with very different personalities. 'Created' is the appropriate word here, for Kilburn used characterisation to give personality traits to the 'characters' in his writing. It was a very literary technique, and, therefore, consultations with works from within the field of literature study have also been used.

In *The Auden Generation* (1976), for example, Samuel Hynes gives a fascinating account of the styles of literature as used by those of the 'Auden generation' – writers born after 1900 but before the outbreak of the First World War. Kilburn is a member of such a group and Auden believes that this particular group of writers is unique because they manage to transcend their work from the passive into the active, and thus actively aid in helping to quell the era's cultural crisis. The problem is that literature research does not take into account sports writing – in the example of Kilburn there appears to be little reason to do so, his work is found in newspapers. This is the first and only study which makes a case for Kilburn's cricket writing to be seen as belonging, at least in part, to the 'literature' genre.

Therefore this study sits somewhere in the middle of sports and cultural history, media studies and literature study. The closest thing to it is Bateman's *Cricket, Literature and*

Culture (2009), for it ties in a little media history with plenty of literary history and cultural analysis. Now this study presents a literary history with plenty of sports media history and cultural analysis. It is a small step in the academic growth in knowledge of the culture of cricket writing; perhaps now J.M. Kilburn and the cultural impact of *his* interwar cricket writing can be pencilled in on the map.

The career profiles of J.M. Kilburn, Sir Neville Cardus and Alfred Pullin

J.M. Kilburn: active from 1934-1976

In 1914, at the outbreak of the First World War, J.M. Kilburn was only five years of age, but as a result of the abandonment of first class cricket during the conflict, international cricketers found themselves playing league cricket, and watching them was Kilburn (Kilburn, 1972). To a boy whose interest in cricket was 'obsessional' (p10), these international players became his 'unwitting tutors' (p11).

The Bradford League of the First World War presented club cricket at a standard probably never equalled before or since... For one sixpence, or threepence for boys, I could have seen – and probably did – three or four international cricketers on one side and two or three on the other (Kilburn, 1972, p11).

These years appear to have been crucial in the development of Kilburn into the writer that he would eventually become, one whose attention to detail was minute and who latched on to the idea of a player's individuality by almost obsessional proportions.

In those formative years were sown seeds of ability to recognise a difference between the polished and the crude. From the Bradford League I must have absorbed, unconsciously, impressions of cricketing character. I did not need a scoreboard to tell me that George Gunn was batting or that Cecil Parkin was bowling (Kilburn, 1972, p11).

His mention of absorbing 'cricketing character' is significant due to its literary connotations – this study includes a section specifically dedicated to his use of characterisation. Kilburn's upbringing enabled him to, when not playing outside or simulating cricket on the dining room table, read countless books, and it was on one winter's evening when everything he had known in life – cricket and literature – all came together like the pieces in a jigsaw. Kilburn recalled the moment in *Thanks to Cricket*:

My father, still collecting books, was reading a new acquaintance one winter evening when he quoted aloud:
'When Ranji [Kumar Ranjitsinhji] passed out of cricket a wonder and a glory departed from the game for ever... Did he really happen; was he perhaps a dream all dreamed on some midsummer's night long ago?'... All dreamed on some midsummer's night long ago. The music vibrated.
I had tasted Cardus.
(Kilburn, 1972, p17)

This is incredibly significant because there is a clear acknowledgement from Kilburn that he was enchanted by the aesthetic style of Cardus. Kilburn himself admits, in *Thanks to*

Cricket, that he never thought of *cricket* writing as a career: 'Cricket was one of the subjects in my adolescent literary leanings but only one of them. I intended to be a writer, but so far as I remember I never intended to be a *cricket* writer' (p14, italics mine). This is very important for it proves that Kilburn came into cricket writing with a very 'literary' mindset, this was a man who wanted to be a writer, but who evidently only chose cricket because he saw it was possible by Cardus – a man who, himself, also originally had nothing to do with *cricket* writing, as is outlined later on. Indeed, even David Hopps, writing Kilburn's obituary in the *Guardian* in 1993, suggests that: 'Between them, Cardus and Kilburn were responsible for elevating cricket writing to literary heights not remotely considered by any other sport' and notes the mutual respect from Cardus the other way, thanks, initially, to that letter: '[Following] Kilburn's first match – the Roses match at Bramall Lane in 1934 – he received a letter from Cardus informing him that he was the best cricket writer of his time and expressing the wish that they might soon meet.'

According to an anonymously-written obituary in *The Times* (1993), Kilburn's position in the cricket writing canon would have been substantially more prominent had he moved from working for *The Yorkshire Post*: 'Had he worked for a national paper there is little doubt that he would have been as widely acknowledged as Cardus and R.C. Robertson-Glasgow and E.W. Swanton, with all of whom he overlapped.' Hopps (1993) concurred that 'If the *Manchester Guardian* could take pride in Neville Cardus, then Kilburn was held in equally deep and abiding respect on the other side of the Pennines.' According to Hopps (1993), Kilburn became quickly known as "Yorkshire's Cardus", however it would appear that Kilburn's reputation was hindered by never moving to write for a national title, simply by the fact that in nowhere throughout the roughly 4,000 pages of *Wisden Anthology* books – to which this study will often refer, usually regarding articles submitted by Cardus – covering all editions in the annual *Wisden* series from 1863-1982, there is not one by-lined piece included by Kilburn, whereas Cardus is featured prominently.

Kilburn's educational background was the antithesis of Cardus's, featuring a degree in economics from his birth town university, Sheffield, before going on to teach at a Harrogate prep school (Hamilton, 2008). He then spent a winter travelling in Finland (Hamilton, 2008, Hopps, 1993, *The Times*, 1993, Engel 1990), thanks to having forged a friendship with the country's vice-consul (*The Times*, 1993), and it was from there that he sent numerous travel articles to *The Yorkshire Post*, endearing his writing talents to then *Yorkshire Post* editor, Arthur Mann (Hamilton, 2008, Hopps, 1993, *The Times*, 1993, Engel 1990).

Kilburn continued to write for *The Yorkshire Post* as its chief cricket correspondent until 1976, though still contributed writings on Test cricket for four years thereafter (Hamilton,

2008, Hopps, 1993, *The Times*, 1993, Engel 1990). Throughout that time, as mentioned above, whilst not necessarily receiving the nationwide acclaim of some of his peers, he commanded respect from his own newspaper, to the point that 'in the sports room of *The Yorkshire Post* no one ever dared to change his copy' (*The Times*, 1993). This in itself makes the study of his works more profitable, because the writing under his name genuinely belongs to *him*, and is therefore free of the influence of the sub-editor's eye.

Sir Neville Cardus: active from 1917-1975

It ought first to be pointed out the uncertainty of the above dates regarding Sir Neville Cardus's writing career; according to Arlott (1964, in Green, 1984, pp320-323), he first began writing for the *Manchester Guardian* in 1917 and took up cricket writing after falling ill in 1919 (Arlott, 1964, in Green, 1984, pp320-323, Bateman, 2009). This halted in 1940 due to the Second World War, though he continued writing thereafter until well into the second half of the twentieth century – for example he was previewing the Edinburgh Festival for the *Guardian* in 1968, seven years before his death (Cardus, 1968), and contributed a number of significantly-sized essay pieces for numerous editions of *Wisden* throughout the 1960s and into the 1970s, including an obituary tribute to Australian cricketer Jack Gregory as late as 1973 (Cardus, 1973, in Green, 1984, pp922-923). He published *Full Score*, a book that was an infusion of cricket and music writing, as an eighty-one year-old in 1970 (Cardus, 1970). Upon his death, in 1975, fellow cricket writer John Arlott wrote a dedication to Cardus in the *Guardian* in March of that year, describing him as 'the father of literate sports writing', and added that:

Just as there can never be a greater cricketer than W.G. Grace – because he created the whole technique of modern cricket, and no one can do that again – so there can never be a greater cricket writer than Neville Cardus. He created it. (Arlott, *The Guardian*, March, 1975)

He also, ten years previously, wrote a special tribute to Cardus in the 1965 edition of *Wisden*, in a long-form essay, within which he described the effect Cardus's career had on cricket writing. According to Arlott (1965, in Green, 1984, p320), Cardus was the first to bring 'qualities of personalization, literary allusion and imagery' to cricket writing, whereas previously there had been only quantitative 'cricket-reporting, informed, sound in judgement, pleasant in manner.' Cardus was the first to bring extra dimensions to cricket writing, building and expanding his reports to go deeper than a mere recounting of the day's scores and statistics.

By such methods as presenting the contest between bowler and batsman as a clash not only of skills but of characters, he created something near to a mythology of the game... in Mr Cardus's reports, the ordinary spectator saw his romantic and heroic feelings put into words for the first time. (Arlott, 1965, in Green, 1984, p320)

There are numerous crossovers between the styles of Kilburn and Cardus. Both, for example, could be very aesthetic in their writing, both wrote with a 'narrative luxury' – outlined in chapter two – and seemed to place greater importance on their stories as rounded pieces of writing, rather than journalistic pieces in which they had to give as much information and quantitative detail in as fewer words as possible (Harcup, 2004).

The major difference, however, lies within the writers' apparent attitude to their art form. Kilburn, for example, appears to be more realist in nature: the focus of Kilburn's works revolves around what he is writing about, the *content*. Kilburn categorises players and playing styles by region, giving identities based on the hereditary traits of the team about which he is writing – examined further on, but an example of which includes: 'To know Woolley at the crease is to know the calm maturity of sunlit Kentish meadows'. Cardus, meanwhile, was all about the *words*, and how he *conveys* meaning. Bateman (2009, p98) suggests that Cardus 'proposes that a particular individual cricketing style can be rendered by using an apposite literary style or mode' and 'often aestheticised cricket by way of literary allusion', before quoting Cardus himself in an essay entitled 'Walter Brearley'. Here Cardus suggests that: 'The man who would write fittingly of great cricketers must look to his choice of language; his theme might call one day for prose and another for poetry...' before going on to suggest that for certain, individual players, one would have to employ the writing style of Dickens, Carlyle and so on, depending about whom one is writing.

The influence of Cardus within cricket writing is far-reaching; any study into the genre would likely involve a great deal of reference to his work. Gibson stated, writing Cardus's obituary in *Wisden*, that 'all cricket writers of the last half century have been influenced by Cardus' (Gibson, in Green, 1984, p904). Without the backdrop of Cardus's career, and the changes in attitude he brought to cricket writing, the styles and techniques used by Kilburn would be a lot harder to contextualise – whether or not Kilburn would have been the writer he was without the earlier emergence of Cardus is a debate in itself.

Alfred Pullin: active from 1892-1931

Alfred Pullin was the only writer of the three looked at in this study whose career began in the nineteenth century. It is a career which connects some of the most important eras in the development of cricket writing, including the beginning of, and initial flourishing of, the career of Cardus, as well as venturing into the decade in which Kilburn began writing for the same newspaper. Pullin was the type of journalist to whom Arlott was referring when he suggested that, before came Cardus, there were many cricket reporters who were 'informed, sound in judgement, pleasant in manner', rather than displaying 'qualities of personalization, literary allusion and imagery' (1965, in Green, 1984, p320).

Pullin's career encapsulated the most important years of journalism and newspaper production, the period during which the industry, as Bromley & O'Malley (1997, p89) note, expanded from its development into 'a more 'popular' press in the 1880s and 1890s' to 'the most significant growth in readership [which] did not occur until after 1910, and the press... began to reach 'something like the full reading public' (Williams, 1961, p176-7, in Bromley & O'Malley, 1997, p89). He was Kilburn's cricket writing predecessor and wrote for *The Yorkshire Post* and *Yorkshire Evening Post* between 1892 and 1931 (Allison, 2004) – there was a small gap, the 1932 and 1933 seasons, before Kilburn was hired in 1934 (Kilburn, 1972, Hopps, 1993, Hamilton, 2008).

During this period of rapid evolution within the media industry (Ensor, 1936, Williams, 1997, Harcup, 2004), Pullin was said, by his biographer, to have 'define[d] the role of the journalist in sport' (Allison, 2004). Writing under the pseudonym 'Old Ebor', he had developed a style of sports writing which realised the sports journalist's responsibility as 'the critic, popularizer, and interpreter of a particular team to its public' (Allison, 2004). In the next section of this study, the evolution of the newspaper industry, thanks to the Northcliffe revolution (Ensor, 1936, Taylor, 1965, Cranfield, 1978, Carey, 1992, Temple, 1996, Williams, 1996, 1997), is looked at in much more detail, however it is possible to see the stylistic change of Pullin between his reporting of, for example, the 1899 Test versus Australia at Headingley (Pullin, *The Yorkshire Post*, June 30, 1899) and his writing of the 1920s. His descriptions of the play in 1899 being rather prescriptive, a simple recount of the main action and news of the day's play without any additional descriptive detail, for example: 'Mr. Darling [Australia's captain] sent in his hitters to force the run-getting, but in half an hour three men had been sent back to the pavilion each credited with a cypher [a duck]' (Pullin, *The Yorkshire Post*, June 30, 1899) – there are no details as to the way in which they lost their wickets, just that they occurred. By the 1920s, however, more often Pullin pushes his descriptive boundaries, even offering up more of an individual take on matters – which is something Kilburn would become known for – for example in writing how 'In trying to pull a ball from Tate... Oldroyd cocked it up badly and was fortunate in Brown not being close enough up to make a catch off the stroke' (Pullin, *The Yorkshire Evening Post*, August 18, 1925). There is evidence to suggest that, whilst he was certainly a *journalist*, employing the use of the 'inverted pyramid' and showing an appreciation of news values (Harcup and O'Neill, 2001, Harcup, 2004), his style became more aesthetic – evidence that it was editor Arthur Mann's thinking to, upon the retirement of Pullin, eventually employ somebody who wrote in an aesthetic, and ultimately 'literary', way. That person was J.M. Kilburn.

Changing Innings Part One: 'Abominably stereotyped'

This part of the study looks to analyse J.M. Kilburn's work within the cultural context of the 1930s. It is important to now acknowledge a greater interest in the *period* in which Kilburn began his career, rather than simply the writing itself, for the 1930s saw many social and cultural developments, namely due to the rise of modernity (Bradbury & McFarlane, 1976, Cunningham, 1988, Shuttleworth, 2003), which therefore created a social climate which was unique in British, and international, history.

There is an odd twist with Kilburn's cricket writing that shows his work as an anti-modernity media text. Often he bemoaned the present-day state of cricket – 'even bowling methods have become abominably stereotyped' (1937, *In Search of Cricket*, p54) – and instead of looking ahead to a brighter future, looked nostalgically back to when cricket was in what he perceived to be a good state – 'It is a common cry that modern cricket lacks such personalities as graced it in the 'Golden Age' when every county had one man or more who attracted the crowds as much by himself as by his performances,' he wrote (1937, *In Search of Cricket*, p54). There is an irony, therefore, in that as much as Kilburn bemoaned modernist ideals and encroaching foreign cultures, his very job symbolised modern technology. Wagner (2012, p28) suggests that modernity 'has always been associated with progress... it gives rise to a coming – bright – future that dissociates itself from the – often miserable – present', however, whilst the very essence of sports journalism suggests modernist traits – it was Northcliffe who advanced the newspaper in the early twentieth century from containing 'long reports of political speeches' to reports on sporting events, much 'to the reader's joy' (Taylor, 1965, p187) – cricket writers like Kilburn do not tend to look ahead to a bright future at all.

The evolution of the national British press was, of course, ultimately a consequence of the industrial revolution; the development of more economical and productive presses gave the opportunity for newspapers to print more copies of their publication and the improvement in the national public transport infrastructure – especially the development of the railways – allowed for a greater reach in terms of distribution (Ensor, 1936, Woodward, 1938, Taylor, 1965). Similarly, modern cricket couldn't exist without the technological developments which advanced society. A regular county cricket competition was only possible with modern public transport (and increased the ease with which teams could travel the globe for international competition) (Brailsford, 1992, Birley, 1999). It is unlikely that Kilburn, Cardus and all their cricket-writing peers would have graced the press boxes of cricket grounds throughout the country were it not for such advancements in technology.

In 1930s British society, there were, to borrow the phrase from Keith Williams (1996, p1) regarding the geopolitics of the same era, 'awesome stirrings', which is why it is so interesting that both Kilburn and Neville Cardus, for example, in their cricket writing, managed to portray indifference towards the modernising world. Bateman, who describes Neville Cardus as a writer 'whose centrality in the [cricket writing] canon makes him something of a Shakespeare figure' (2009, p6) whilst noting Cardus's ability to enforce upon his readership a cultural opinion, suggests that 'inter-war cricket writers shared a number of... cultural perceptions, not least their tendency to both celebrate and bemoan the loss of the rural 'organic' community' (2009b, p262). If we are to assume modernity began with the rural upheaval of society to an urban factory setting, Bateman's suggestion that interwar cricket writers collectively bemoaned the loss of England's rural identity is a strong indicator for an overall disregard for modernity.

Kilburn, however, does not *directly* state his annoyance at a particular cultural phenomenon. Perhaps this is because of the belief of Pierre Bourdieu, who suggested that sport's history is an autonomous one, that 'even when marked by the major events of economic and social history, [sport] has its own tempo, its own evolutionary flaws, its own crisis... its own chronology' (1978, in Mukerji & Schudson, 1991, p358). This could be the reason why there is not one word directly implicating the early twentieth century's major events, such as the Great War, the tensions in the build-up to the Second World War, the rise of fascism, the economic depressions and so on – which, given the other, wider cultural implications that can be read through Kilburn's writing, is something of a surprise. The closest that he comes to bemoaning the political state of Europe was in the complaining of the weather after rain prevented a Yorkshire versus Derbyshire match from offering any sort of entertainment at Chesterfield in 1939:

This scandal of a summer played its most irritating prank upon us to-day... [When] the rain falls without cease we can resign ourselves to loss of cricket and go promptly home to fireside (or go wherever our uncricketing interests lie), but when half the afternoon offers brilliant sunshine, and still there is no play, the woes of Tantalus can no further go. (Kilburn, *The Yorkshire Post*, July 17, 1939)

It is the intense emotional aspect of this short piece, coupled with the timing – weeks before the outbreak of the Second World War – which suggests political angst for a man who loves, and whose job revolves around, cricket, and who is probably, along with the rest of the nation, aware of the impending conflict which would again put a stop to first class cricket.

There are other examples of Cardus and Kilburn taking a more direct involvement with the issue of modernity; Bateman uses the example of Cardus's dislike for the 'perfidious' signs

of Americanisation and standardisation following the First World War – he ‘contrasted cinema unfavourably with the old, seemingly organic, working-class culture of the pre-war music hall’ (2009, p101) – and cites his description of ‘Lancashire bowler Cec Parkin as ‘the first jazz cricketer’ as the point when ‘he implicated the sport in a broader debate regarding the cultural effects of modernity’ (p102), because jazz, despite Cardus’s apparent liking of the musical genre, with its then-recent migration to British shores, symbolised an evolving popular culture. Kilburn suggested a similar dislike for standardisation: ‘At most first-class matches to-day,’ he wrote, ‘a scorecard is an absolute necessity, for even bowling methods have become abominably stereotyped’ (Kilburn, 1937, *In Search of Cricket*, p54). This was something he feared and another reason why he latched on to Herbert Sutcliffe as a symbol of cricketing, and English, ideology.

The wider cultural movement towards a ‘modern’ culture was one which Kilburn, quite clearly, abhorred, in an era when, as LeMahieu (1988, p227) pointed out, ‘critics argued that modern communications disseminated an undifferentiated ‘mass culture’ whose pervasive uniformity threatened to smother traditional humanism.’ It was this idea of ‘the masses’ that caused concern for modernists, for associated with the ‘masses’ and ‘mass culture’ was also this idea of standardisation. Raymond Williams pointed out in his *Culture and Society 1780-1950* (1958) that ‘masses’ was a new word for ‘mob’, yet the stereotypical traits of what one associated with ‘mob culture’ was continued into ‘mass culture’ (p287):

...the traditional characteristics of the mob were retained in its significance: gullibility, fickleness, herd-prejudice, lowness of taste and habit. The masses, on this evidence, formed the perpetual threat to culture. Mass-thinking, mass-suggestion, mass-prejudice would threaten to swamp considered individual thinking and feeling (Raymond Williams, 1958, p288).

It is due to the aesthetic nature of Kilburn’s writing – his use of a ‘narrative luxury’ – that his work suggests a conscious stylistic move to differentiate from other journalism, to avoid a stagnation or standardisation in his work, to distance himself from the wider encroaching social influences of general modernity, in much the same way that modernist writers such as James Joyce pushed the boundaries of English literature (Bradbury & McFarlane, 1976, Hynes, 1976, Cunningham, 1988, Shuttleworth 2003). It is a representation of the social attitudes that seem to have been prevalent during the interwar years – a society which was morally torn.

Seaman (1970, p52 in Street, 2000, p163) noted that: ‘In matters of manners and morals, the years between the wars saw a running battle... between those who claimed to stand for what they deemed to be traditional values, and those who emphasized adventurousness

and novelty'. His words highlight exactly those tensions which were spread throughout interwar society, with the outcome affecting, for example, even some of the biggest media organisations, such as the BBC and the debate regarding its Sunday broadcasting policy. Within a decade during the interwar period there developed 'a growing tension' between those – 'particularly within the young and the working class' – who believed 'that the one day of rest should be a time to relax' and those who were 'advocates of strict Lord's Day Observance' (Street, 2000, pp162-163). The country was beginning to see division in tastes and beliefs as other cultural and societal possibilities became plausible, such as relaxing on a Sunday, rather than attending church.

The study is now split into three chapters, the first of which analyses how Kilburn's interwar writing does not conform to some of even the most basic journalistic principles. The second then examines how Kilburn uses literary styles and techniques within his writing before using as a case study the example of Herbert Sutcliffe – the player onto whom Kilburn bestows an almost godlike essence.

1.

'The rawness of this particular new recruit was exceptional; he knew nothing of the process in newspaper production, he could neither type nor write shorthand and he was not gifted with the slightest sense of news-value.'

J.M. Kilburn, *In Search of Cricket*, 1937, p23

A Writer in a Journalist's World

This chapter takes the writing of J.M. Kilburn from between 1934 and 1939 and puts it into a journalistic context. Whilst the main aim of this study is to argue that Kilburn's writing transcends the 'journalism'/'literature' boundary, it is just as important to gauge exactly how his writing does *not* conform to 'journalism' and journalistic traits, as well as how his writing *can* be considered 'literature'. Therefore, this chapter will tackle the issue of Kilburn's writing from a journalistic perspective, using as a starting point the news values as originally outlined by Galtung and Ruge in 1965, and drawing on the research which came thereafter, such as that conducted by Stuart Hall – '*The determination of news photographs*', for example (in Cohen and Young, 1981) – and others such as Harcup and O'Neill (2001), Harrison (2006) and Brighton and Foy (2007).

However, first it is necessary to put into context that which we are trying to contextualise, for the very beginning of Kilburn's career at *The Yorkshire Post* coincided with the boom in newspaper sales across the country. Williams (1997, p48) noted how the national daily press 'mushroomed' from a total circulation of 3.1 million in 1918 to 10.6 million 'by the eve

of the second world war', thanks to a huge 69 percent of the population over 16 who read a national daily newspaper, according to a '1939 readership survey' (Williams, 1996, p23). The very period under examination in this study marked a high point for an industry which had been growing since the middle of the previous century – Williams estimated that national daily press circulation was only 60,000 in 1850 (1997, p48) – and it was largely thanks to the impact of Lord Northcliffe between the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries that this huge surge in newspaper popularity occurred (Ensor, 1936, Taylor, 1965, Cranfield, 1978, Carey, 1992, Temple, 1996, Williams, 1996, 1997).

Building on his earlier, highly successful magazines – such as *Answers to Correspondence on Every Subject Under the Sun*, (hereafter '*Answers*') an innovative but informal and humorous publication whose circulation reached 800,000 per week, contributing to the near-two million total circulation for the portfolio of magazines which Northcliffe would go on to produce (Temple, 1996, Williams, 1997) – and a population which both enjoyed levels of literacy that were higher than ever – thanks mainly to the 1870 Education Act – and greater wages, coupled with more leisure time, Lord Northcliffe, in 1896, launched the *Daily Mail* (Ensor, 1936, Taylor, 1965, Cranfield, 1978, Carey, 1992, Temple, 1996, Williams, 1996, 1997). This newspaper was based on the premise of *Answers*; it was far more informal and marked the beginning of a change in journalism, which saw what Williams (1997, p49) described as 'the age of *The Times*' (the dominant newspaper of the Victorian era, *The Times* revelled in the 'serious journalism' of the time, when 'content of the newspapers ranged from political polemic to serious consideration and analysis of the pressing issues of the day' (Williams 1997, p48)) evolve into the age of the popular, commercial press, for which Northcliffe, according to Harrison (2006, p56), 'proved to be extremely successful at providing new editorial content and a presentation style which appealed to mass readership.'

Williams (1997, p49) pointed out that these changes to the industry 'were greeted with howls of outrage from the cultural critics of the time', yet it did not stop Northcliffe's *Daily Mail* becoming Britain's first mass circulation daily newspaper (Ensor, 1936, Williams, 1996, 1997, Harrison, 2006). As part of the new editorial content, the newspaper was the first to print what Williams (1997, p54) described as 'lavish sports reports', thanks, in part, to Northcliffe's love of cycling.

Harrison (2006, p57) observed that it was around the same time 'the commercial press evolved, so did news journalism', stylistically, for it was with this 'new journalism' that came the introduction of the 'particular formula known as the inverted pyramid' (p58). In one of

his many books regarding the profession, Harcup (2004, p2), in his *Journalism: principles and practice*, offers that journalism, at its most basic, answers the questions 'Who? What? Where? When? Why? And How?', and Harrison (2006) made the link between this technique and the inverted pyramid, by noting Pottker's (2003) argument, 'that it [the inverted pyramid] teaches journalists to begin their story with a lead sentence that has to answer four or five 'W' questions, a formula which is still used and taught today' (p58). This shows that, roughly half a century before their research was published, journalists were already thinking about the 'news values' which would first be outlined *academically* by Galtung and Ruge in 1965. It would seem plausible to suggest that there is no reason for Kilburn, or any other journalist or sports writer of the era, to be ignorant towards the values that would eventually be published by Galtung and Ruge – and later revised by Stuart Hall (in Cohen and Young, 1981), Harcup and O'Neill (2001), Harrison (2006) and Brighton and Foy (2007).

However, there is also reason to suggest that this may not, in fact, have been the case. The infamous 'Bodyline' tour to Australia in 1932-33 had created what Steen (2008) called 'sport's first significant international row' (p27), and as a result, the next tour to Australia carried with it a new journalistic attitude, though what was interesting was that the original cricket writers were, according to Arthur Mailey, a former Test player who had taken up journalism, not good enough for the job. 'On the next England tour [1936] came an army of 'incident-spotters',' he said, 'just in case there were repercussions which were too newsy to be adequately handled by the ordinary cricket writer' (Mailey, in Steen 2008, pp27-28). It adds an interesting twist to suggest that the cricket writers would be unable to spot the news values within the sporting event, as if, up until the point of the 'Bodyline' tour, and subsequent following tours, there had been no need for 'proper' journalists to attend the matches as there were no 'news' events. However, throw in events which caused an international row, and suddenly there was the possibility, on the next tour, for 'repercussions which were too newsy to be adequately handled by the ordinary cricket writer'.

The one thing which is certain is that 'news values' were being used in journalism long before Galtung and Ruge's (1965) study. Unlike what Mailey hints at above – or at least what Mailey suggests was the belief of the *editors* of the time – it is perfectly plausible that Kilburn was comfortable with what constituted 'news values'; rather he consciously, stylistically, opted against using the 'inverted pyramid', and made little or no attempt to convey four or five of the 'W' questions in his first sentence. Below is an opening paragraph of Kilburn's. For now, the context of the match, and therefore the piece, shall not be given:

As I came over the Pennines this morning there was not a cloud in the sky, and the freshness of the morning was in itself a justification for living. This afternoon at Old Trafford the clouds stole softly over the turf. That was as it should be. All the sunshine of cricket was absent, scattered and scorned by an overwhelming consciousness that this was no occasion for light, that a sombre setting alone could be fitting for the dark hours through which we passed in this struggle for championship points and the avoidance of defeat by a long-standing rival (Kilburn, *The Yorkshire Post*, August 6, 1934).

Of the 'Who? What? Where? When? Why? And How?' questions to which Harcup (2004) refers, and to which the very first sentence, according to Pottker (2003), ought to answer four or five of these questions, Kilburn's first sentence answers none at all, at least not in the way Harcup suggests he should. This extract is taken from the match report of the first day's play between Lancashire and Yorkshire at Old Trafford in Manchester on August 5, 1934 (the report being published in the following day's newspaper).

The 'Who?' in this sentence is himself – 'As I came over the Pennines' – but this is a match report, the 'Who?' is Lancashire and Yorkshire, or possibly an individual player or two as well if they have made a significant contribution to the game, which in this particular day's play, they didn't. The 'What?' is completely unanswered, the 'Where?' gives first only a vague impression to the reader that this mystery event is occurring, or has occurred, somewhere over the hills that separate them and Lancashire before mentioning Old Trafford in the second sentence, the 'When?' is limited to 'the morning' despite the report covering a full *day's* play, whilst the 'Why?' and the 'How?' are both equally disregarded.

There is another interesting, if not contradictory, issue raised by Brighton and Foy's *News Values* (2007). It regards the opinion-editorial piece – described by Brighton and Foy (2007, p3) as a piece of journalism that is 'often a longer view of a news item', it is usually 'charged with the personality of the writer... these are still news items, but can often be quite some way removed from the core values that were applied to the initial story' – for the fact that if one were to attempt at defining Kilburn's interwar writing in journalistic terms, its closest fit would be what Brighton and Foy consider an 'opinion' piece, or column. Hamilton (2008, p12), for example, suggests that Kilburn's writing was 'formidably authoritative and opinionated', that *The Yorkshire Post* 'was paying for *his* view' (p14) – highlighted by his use of the first person in the above roses match report extract – and noted that in 'some' of his pieces there was 'a dry, mischievous humour' (p19). Hamilton offered this sentence of Kilburn's as an example from when he was working in Australia: 'At the kerbside five or six strikingly attractive young ladies were standing beneath a sign that read: *Queue for Kilburn*... An envious companion assured me that the girls were merely waiting for a local bus' (Kilburn, in Hamilton, 2008, p20).

Kilburn's *In Search of Cricket* (1937) is a book made up of his own cricket writing for *The Yorkshire Post*, match reports that appeared in the newspaper that were collected, collated, copied and repeated in the form of a book. If one were to look for a modern-day equivalent from outside the world of cricket – cricket is one of the few sports, or wider topics, which caters for anthological representation – then it is impossible to come by a book full of *news* writing by a journalist who has taken the *news* stories he or she has written for a newspaper and copied them directly into a book. It simply would not make sense, and would not work in book form. The opinion piece, however, would, and does, work. Charlie Brooker is an example of a modern-day columnist who does just that, publishing collections of his own work regularly every couple of years since the middle of the last decade. He is one of many columnists who have done the same stretching back into the twentieth century, such as Jeremy Clarkson's *The World According to Clarkson* series (2005, 2007, 2009, 2010, 2013, 2014), and Matthew Parris and, earlier, Bernard Levin's collections of columns for *The Times* (Parris, 1991, Crewe, 2004, *The Telegraph* [anon], 2004). All are books born out of collections of their own columns; all are autonomous, within the above titles each piece is usually simply dated and titled.

This, however, does not explain how Kilburn managed to "get away with" writing in a style which, journalistically, was more akin to what we would now consider a column, or opinionated piece of writing. The point Brighton and Foy made in describing what they meant by an 'opinion' piece, was that it was written in *supplementary* fashion to the already-displayed news story. Kilburn was the only Yorkshire cricket correspondent, and whilst it is true that during Test matches an actual column was often produced, usually by an ex-professional – for the 1934 home Ashes Test series against Australia, for example, it was written by former England international and Yorkshire player, Wilfred Rhodes (*The Yorkshire Post*, 1934) – it was Kilburn who was 'breaking' the news of the match. At first sight, there was nothing for him to 'supplement', however, there was a very deliberate design to the layout of *The Yorkshire Post* which allowed Kilburn to write in the way that he did.

Before every piece of Kilburn's in *The Yorkshire Post*, there was a section of writing, distinguished by being typed in bold, italics or a different font, which laid out the most important facts and statistics of the match, as illustrated in figures 1-3. The closest journalistic design term to this feature in *The Yorkshire Post* is what is known as a 'standfirst'. In his *A Dictionary of Journalism*, Harcup (2014, Oxford University Press online version) describes the feature as: 'A sentence or two of text that is typically placed beneath

a headline but before the main body of an article, which introduces or contextualizes what follows.' *Figure 1* shows an example. In bold, underneath the various headlines and sub-headlines, is a section of eight mini-paragraphs, almost bullet-pointed, which detail the main outcomes of the day. They do exactly the job of the 'standfirst', as outlined by Harcup (2014), though it is much larger than 'a sentence or two', therefore *The Yorkshire Post's* interwar standfirsts for Kilburn will be referred to as 'enlarged standfirsts'.

This is almost a match report in itself, but it is only after this that Kilburn's by-line comes, and the beginning of his own writing. With the above acting as the 'hook' for the reader, it breaks the news events of the match, answers the 'Who? What? Where? When? Why? And How?' and allows Kilburn to forget about writing with the inverted pyramid structure – Franklin (2008) notes how writing the standfirst is the job of the sub-editor – and instead concentrate on being literary, creative, illusionary and picturesque.

Interestingly, in defining 'standfirsts', Harcup (2014) points out that this is a style 'most often used for features'. This further muddies the waters if one were determined to define Kilburn's work in a journalistic context, especially in the knowledge that, stylistically in the body of his writing, his writing style shares some attributes of the opinion piece or column. However, since clearly his writing does not sit comfortably in the journalist genre, then it is in the conclusion of Brighton and Foy's *News Values* (2007) where answers may be found. Having spent their entire book discussing the evolution in 'news values' beliefs, from, amongst others, Galtung and Ruge in 1965, Stuart Hall later in the century, Harcup and O'Neill at the turn of the millennium and Harrison in 2006, Brighton and Foy (2007, pp193-194) suggest that it is time to conjure new thoughts on what constitutes 'news', perhaps even scrapping the term altogether. 'Are we still dealing with News in the accepted sense?' they ask. 'Or should we redefine the very name of the commodity itself?' (Brighton and Foy, 2007, p193). They quote Robert Cauthorn, who suggests that we should forget about the term 'news' and contemplate the fact that journalists are writing 'stories' (p193). They suggest that, now, it 'is certainly true that... broadcast journalists are being encouraged to envisage themselves more as narrators than as news breakers' (p194). This links directly back to Kilburn's interwar *Yorkshire Post* newspaper design – it is the 'enlarged standfirst' which precedes Kilburn's pieces that does the 'news breaking', leaving Kilburn to 'narrate' in his own aesthetic style. Given that it was as recently as 2007 that Brighton and Foy suggest this change in attitude, it could be argued that Kilburn was, in fact, way ahead of his time.

Whilst it is controversial to describe Kilburn's writing as 'literature', there is more convincing evidence to suggest that it is more 'literature' than it is 'journalism', simply because there

seems to be so little confidence in the news values which actually make up journalistic writing. The fact that Harcup and O'Neill's (2001) 'contemporary' news values require that 'news stories must generally satisfy *one* or more' (p279, *italics mine*) of ten different values – and even then they admit that there are 'exceptions to every rule' (p278) – does not portray a confidence in what they believe stands 'journalism' apart from any other form of writing. In defence of Harcup and O'Neill, they do not suggest that their 2001 study is *the* definitive set of news values used in journalism. In presenting their own list of news values, they do so 'tentatively' (p278) and are sure to make clear that their research is merely a 'contribution' to the 'process' of our academic quest to 'make news values more transparent' (p279) before citing the fact that we need further research to help understand what seems to be a very complicated topic. Earlier in their study, for example, Harcup and O'Neill (2001) note the words of Tunstall (1970, p21), who suggested that Galtung and Ruge's original new values could in fact have been based on more archaic, intrinsic values: 'Many of the factors which Galtung and Ruge find as predisposing foreign events to become news – elite persons, negative events, unexpectedness-within-predictability, cultural proximity – are also found in Shakespeare's plays' (in Harcup & O'Neill, 2001, p264). In other words, there are styles of writing to which one could apply 'news values', even though they are not journalism, and the writers are not specifically attempting to adhere to these principles.

During Yorkshire's County Championship match away to Warwickshire in 1938, one of the events within the game was the fact that this was the first match in which a brand new scoreboard was used, and a Yorkshireman was the first to see his score pass one hundred on it. In the context of the match, it was not the most important event to occur; within an 'inverted pyramid' context, a 'conventional' news journalist would place such a happening at not the tip of the pyramid – for it was not *the most* 'newsy' outcome of the day's play – but somewhere a little further down, though still fairly close to the summit. Kilburn wrote in his report's second paragraph: 'Edgbaston also glories a new scoreboard, and to-day Sutcliffe gave the operators their first opportunity of turning up an individual hundred' (Kilburn, *The Yorkshire Post*, June 9, 1938). He adhered to the principles of the inverted pyramid – the scoreboard was mentioned close to the summit of the pyramid, but not quite at the top – however, such is his ignorance towards 'news values', as is suggested by Hamilton (2008) and indirectly by Mailey (in Steen, 2008), Kilburn did not do this with the inverted pyramid in mind. In the previous example of the new scoreboard at Edgbaston, Kilburn did highlight a newsworthy event but only as a coincidence as part of his *literary* writing. Unless we totally rethink our attitude towards what we consider the role of the journalist to be, the closest we can get to classifying Kilburn's work as 'journalism' is if we awkwardly fit it into the category of the column, or opinionated piece, as defined by Brighton and Foy (2007).

But his highly opinionated, and sometimes humorous, style goes beyond that in becoming 'literature'.

Summary

This section has analysed the interwar cricket writing of J.M. Kilburn for *The Yorkshire Post* from a journalistic viewpoint, highlighting how his writing did not conform to the basic journalistic principles which would ultimately first be set out by academics in 1965, thanks to Galtung and Ruge. The evolution of journalism, owed in part to the 'Northcliffe revolution', and the subsequent use of the 'inverted pyramid' style – still in use today – proves beyond doubt that newspapermen of the early twentieth century were definitely aware of, and used in practice, these 'news values' which surfaced in academic circles decades later.

It is safe to assume that Kilburn, a writer for one of the largest regional newspapers in the country, must have had at least an awareness of the basic journalistic principles and news values which, at their most basic, sees journalists conform to the practice of answering most of the 'W' questions – 'Who? What? Where? When? Why? And How?' (Harcup, 2004, p2) – in their opening sentence. This would therefore suggest that Kilburn's consistent failure to adhere to the 'W' questions was a conscious, stylistic or editorial decision.

The evidence suggests that it was a decision made in conjunction with Arthur Mann, his editor at *The Yorkshire Post* at the time and a man who seemingly knew of Kilburn's writing style – and therefore possibly had a notion and/or plan upon his hiring – before bringing him to the newspaper in 1934, thanks to the travel writing which Kilburn sent to him during his time spent in Finland (Hopps, 1993, Hamilton, 2008). To accommodate Kilburn's neglect of journalistic principles, *The Yorkshire Post* ascribed to a design which saw an 'enlarged standfirst' situated before each of Kilburn's match reports. Franklin (2008) confirms that this job is typically that of a sub-editor's, therefore leaving Kilburn free to use his 'literary' style thereafter, whilst the sub-editor's 'enlarged standfirst' took on the role of breaking the news of the match in the 'journalistic' way.

Figure 1. The Yorkshire Post, August 6, 1934. Lancashire v Yorkshire at Old Trafford, Manchester.

14

DREARY PLAY IN ROSES' MATCH

YORKSHIRE TOTAL

291 FOR 6

Monumental Patience of Mitchell and Turner

TWO BRIGHT PERIODS

Yorkshire made a slow start in the match with Lancashire at Manchester.

Only 82 runs had been scored at lunch time, and the total at the close was 291 for six wickets.

Shortly after lunch Sutcliffe had an attack of dizziness, but was able to resume later. He hit five fours in his 66.

Mitchell did not score for 20 minutes, obtained six runs in an hour and 10 in 80 minutes, and altogether batted two and three-quarter hours for 46, which included only one four.

As an exhibition of monumental patience his effort was excelled by Turner, who scored a single in 40 minutes. Later he played more freely.

A. B. Sellers and Leyland gave bright displays.

The attendance, apart from members, was officially returned at 8,127, the receipts amounting to £474.

A collection for Duckworth's benefit fund realised £62.

By J. M. KILBURN, Our Cricket Representative

MANCHESTER, Saturday

As I came over the Pennines this morning there was not a cloud in the sky, and the freshness of the morning was in itself a justification for living. This afternoon at Old Trafford the clouds stole softly over the blue and a delicate shower or two fell on the turf. That was as it should be. All the sunshine of cricket was absent, scattered and scorned by an overwhelming consciousness that this was no occasion for light, that a sombre setting alone could be fitting for the dark hours through which we passed in

Turner was very much after the school Mitchell. He was there for 40 minutes before he got his second run, and during that interval the cricket gods above shed few tears of sympathy upon us poor mortals here below, but, we noticed, not enough to stop the game and save us further misery.

As a matter of fact pleasure was entirely absent from the game, for Sellers continued to play cricket (as distinct from Lancashire-Yorkshire match cricket), though he had his uncertain momentary hint of some good off-drives and some quick running between the wickets. He reached his 50 at 20 minutes past five, was far and away the day's best innings with the possible exception of Leyland's brief effort.

Ten minutes later he hit Booth straight into mid-off's hands, and as he walked the field he received an ovation which no doubt as to the type of batting Lancashire onlookers prefer.

Sutcliffe Resumes His Innings

Sutcliffe came back again at this time and soon made 50 and seemed to be doing far better than earlier in the day, when he made a cut in embryo and was caught the wicket off Watson. Curiously enough Verity was out in a very similar sort of way and so came 6.30. The day did not like the old soldiers, it simply faded, leaving Turner still short of his 50, having been in the middle for more than three hours.

No sooner had the players left the field than the sun shone again with an ill sense of the appropriateness, and we took very mixed memories of cricket this rarely first-class in any department.

Scores

YORKSHIRE—First Innings		LANCASHIRE—First Innings	
Sutcliffe, c Duckworth	66	A. B. Sellers, c P. H. Wood	66
b Watson		b Booth	
Mitchell, lbw b Hopwood	46	Verity, c Duckworth	46
Wood		Watson	
Barber, c Duckworth	25	Smiles, not out	
Booth	25	b 10, lb 12, w 1	
Leyland, b Iddon	20		
Turner, not out	48		
Wood, Macaulay and Bower, no bats			
Total (for 6 wickets)		Total (for 6 wickets)	
291		291	

LANCASHIRE.—F. T. Eckersley, W. H. L. Watson, Hopwood, Iddon, Tyldesley, Paynter, son, Duckworth, Booth and Pollard.

Umpires—Morton and Baldwin.

ARNOLD'S CENTURY

Hants Score Slowly Against Gloucester

With the weather fine at Bristol 7,000 spectators saw the play in Hants benefit match. A collection in aid of the fund realised £47.

The wicket was lifeless, yet Hants spent five hours in scoring 292.

Arnold, in a stay of three hours and 10 minutes, made 116. He waited for the ball, and drove it very hard to the boundary. In this way he earned two 6's.

Figure 2. *The Yorkshire Post*, June 14, 1938. England v Australia 1st Ashes Test at Trent Bridge, Nottingham.

MASTERFUL McCABE FOILS ENGLAND

Hurricane Hitting at Trent Bridge

232 SCORED OUT OF 300

ENGLAND 658 for 8 (dec.). AUSTRALIA 411 and 102 for 1.

A GLORIOUS innings by McCabe when all appeared lost saved Australia in the first "Test" match at Trent Bridge yesterday, and gave them renewed hope of saving the game. With nine wickets in hand, Australia require 145 runs to avoid the innings defeat.

Australia's first innings was a one-man show, for only three men reached double figures, McCabe claiming 232 of the total. So complete was his mastery that he actually made his runs out of 300. This was McCabe's fourth Test century against England, and in it he had a 6 and 34 4's. In a priceless last-wicket stand from Australia's point of view he made 72 out of 77 in 28 minutes.

England's most effective bowling was accomplished by Farnes, who, like Wright, claimed four wickets. The Essex amateur never flagged, and whenever called upon he presented a menacing attack. Wright again looked impressive: but his last three overs cost him 44 runs.




S. J. McCabe

FINGLETON

K. Farnes

"BARRACKED"

By J. M. KILBURN, Our Cricket Representative.

NOTTINGHAM, Monday

A glorious innings of 232, containing one 6 and 34 4's, by McCabe failed to save Australia from the follow-on, but it served to keep England very busily occupied in the field until after half-past three, and by the time it was over, the pristine joy had gone from bowling and fielding. Analysis, too, had been sadly mutilated, and though Farnes and Wright could each lay claim to four wickets, the payment was more than 100 runs, and in the second Australian innings there were long hours of unrewarded toil to make more wearisome the day. Just before the end, the first-wicket partnership was broken through a swift and lovely slip

they would scarcely have been aware of the contemptuous treatment being accorded them. McCabe's whole artistry lay in economy; so perfect was his timing that only those concerned with vain chasing along the boundary edge could appreciate the power in his shots. Occasionally he might, but never within reach of a fieldsmen, and invariably to the extent of four runs.

At 319 O'Reilly presented Paynter, at short mid-on, with a gentle catch. At 334 McCormick was bowled, but in half an hour 77 runs were added for the last wicket, Fleetwood-Smith's share being five.

Four wickets Add 217

There is no counter to batsmanship of this class; England could do no more than acknowledge McCabe's honourable estate.

LANCA WINNI

Glamorga
40

NO EXC
INNINC

Glamorgan display against Trafford yesterday for 163 and 401 in arrears their second 256, with nine in the innings.

Lancashire of 564 for nine ideally suited half the opposition. Singularly of the innings and A. Davies who drove W. batsman real Brierley complete fall in two and Glamorgan their second soundly, and Davies in a remained produced 11.

At the Brierley drives which two hours, an hour later.

Scores:—

L. Washbrook, b Hopwood, c Farnes (A.) Iddon, lbw b Oldfield, c Davies (E.) Jones (E.) Nutter, b Smith D. M. Mat Turnbull (E.)

First Inn

Dyson, c W Pollard Davies (E.) son Brierley Wilkinson Davies (D.) M. J. T. Farrington son Smart, lbw son Jones (E.) Farrington son W. E. Farrington son Davies (H.) Davies (A.) Mercer, b

Mercer Jones (E. O.) Mercer

Phillips Pollard

No

Some 127 of the

Figure 3. *The Yorkshire Post*, July 21, 1934. England v Australia Ashes Test at Headingley, Leeds.

THE YORKSHIRE

BRILLIANT TEST FEAT BY BOWES

THREE AUSTRALIAN WICKETS IN LAST TEN MINUTES

GAME'S CHANGED OUTLOOK AFTER DISAPPOINTING ENGLAND INNINGS

The last ten minutes of the first day of the Fourth Test Match at Leeds yesterday provided one of the most dramatic changes of outlook in the history of the series.

E NGLAND'S prospects seemed gloomy indeed with a first innings score of only 200 runs on a wicket that promised at least twice the number.

Then, when the Australians went in, the Yorkshireman Bowes, in his second spell of bowling—during which not a run was hit from him—took the wickets of Brown, Oldfield and Woodfull.

Official attendance figures showed that the number of those paying, excluding reserved-seat holders, totalled 17,055, with a total attendance of 21,500. The receipts were £2,073 18s. 6d.

The forecast for the Leeds district promises mainly fair weather to-day, with perhaps local thunderstorms or showers later. It will be warm, with a light or moderate east wind.

Impressions of the game by Wilfred Rhodes are given in an adjoining column.

TOURISTS' CLEVER FIELD

By J. M. KILBURN, Our Cricket Representative

HEADINGLEY, Friday

WE have all experienced the kind of weather in which the day opened in brilliant sunshine, then clouds over and becomes dull and wearisome with perhaps a shower of rain, and finally brightens to a thrilling clear evening of great promise for the morrow. So the cricket on the first day's play in

I can recollect, was the first run the Australians had given away, but Bradman gave Hendren another cheap four when he had a shy at Hammond's wicket and the ball went on to the boundary. Bradman was perfectly justified in having this throw, for Hammond had backed up a long way, and Bradman's fielding in general was particularly fine. He had a tremendous amount of ground to cover when fielding deep mid-off to Grimmett, but very few hits got past him.

2.

'For the cricket-writer of serious intent this [1930s] Yorkshire and, indeed, this whole decade of first-class cricket provided rich soil.'

J.M. Kilburn, *In Search of Cricket*, 1937, p30

'The score-card tells quite adequately and without the infliction of unnecessary pain the story of the rest of the innings...'

J.M. Kilburn, *The Yorkshire Post*, July 6, 1935

Journalism as Literature

After having, in the previous section, analysed *The Yorkshire Post* interwar cricket writing of J.M. Kilburn from a *journalistic* perspective, this section changes tack and, instead of outlining why this study believes the writing of Kilburn to be '*not journalism*', it now takes a *literary* perspective and outlines why his writing *can* be considered 'literature'.

This section first tackles the definition of 'literature' and what this study regards as 'literature' – important, for it gives context to the following sections (as well as the rest of the study), all of which relate directly to this term. The section then goes on to outline exactly how Kilburn's interwar works conform to this definition of 'literature', including textual analysis of Kilburn's work as a means of proving, for example, his use of the literary technique 'narrative luxury', as initially outlined by Roland Barthes.

The section also takes into account the work of Kilburn's predecessor, Alfred Pullin, and outlines how the style for which Kilburn came to be known was not, in fact, solely down to

him, but came as a result of earlier experimentation from the editor, Arthur Mann, and Pullin.

Literature: A Context and Definition

What do we mean by 'literature'? Raymond Williams's *Keywords* (1976) is a good starting point. 'Literature is a difficult word', he writes (p180), 'in part because its conventional, contemporary meaning appears, at first sight, so simple.' He suggests that it is only once we start to analyse specific examples that we begin to become troubled with what pieces of writing we can class as 'literature', what pieces we do not class as 'literature' and, most importantly, why we do so: 'There is no apparent difficulty in phrases like English literature or contemporary literature, until we find occasion to ask whether all books and writing are literature (and if they are not, which kinds are excluded and by what criteria)' (p180). Widdowson (1999, p2) concurs, suggesting that the term has 'become so problematic' that 'it approaches the unusable, at least without contorted apologetics'.

This study takes a similar view to 'literature' as Widdowson in *Literature* (1999). He refers to '*written works*', written works whereby 'people choose *deliberately* to use written language in ways distinguishable from other forms of written communication' (p15). The main three areas which he concerns as 'literature' are therefore 'most obviously the genres poetry, prose-fiction and drama' (p15), which is the same as this study, as well as the acknowledgement that 'literature' does not mean *all* written communications, such as 'pamphlets, histories, journalism, diaries, car manuals, menus, promotional literature on fridge-freezers, biographies or beer mats' (p15). The fact is that journalism, and other forms of written communication, will contain *some* literary devices, though that does not make it 'literature', especially not in the sense used by this study. This study, like Widdowson (1999, p15), regards 'literature as operating within the domain of artifice (and hence 'artificial'): i.e. as 'fictive' in the broadest sense'. This study's definition, therefore, revolves around 'creativity', that Kilburn's writing is more 'creative' or 'fictive' than conventional journalism, and whilst Kilburn's writing will naturally contain *some* journalistic devices (as outlined in the previous section regarding news values), his work is far more '*literary*' than that of journalistic writing.

Whilst 'fictive' or 'creative', there are other parts of the definition of literature which should be considered. For example, Widdowson uses Ben Johnson's observation of Shakespeare – that his work is 'not of an age, but for all time' – and Ezra Pound's explanation – that literature is 'news that STAYS news' (1999, p4). The point being that 'literature' is not only

'fictive' or 'creative', but also 'timeless'. Hall (1979) puts forward an argument by David Lodge (1977), where he:

argues that the most striking characteristic of literature is its very high level of formal organisation. Literature, in other words, is language at its fullest stretch... He notes that there have been two aesthetic demands that above all others... These are the demand that art should have a content and the demand that art should be something which is in itself of great beauty (Hall, 1979, p34).

Therefore, this study takes 'literature' to be pieces of fictive, creative, *written* work, whereby 'language has been used at its fullest stretch' (Hall, 1979, p34) to create autonomous, timeless writings.

A Narrative Luxury

There is an abundance of evidence within the interwar cricket writing of J.M. Kilburn to back up the aspect of this study's definition of 'literature' which complies with the belief of Lodge (1977, in Hall, 1979, p34), that 'literature' is 'language [used] at its fullest stretch'. This is because Kilburn went beyond a mere recounting of the day's statistics and did more than simply explain in words what the scoreboard had already told the spectators inside the ground; he expanded upon the actions of the players, detailing with exact precision the players' movements to the point where his writing incorporates the feelings and emotions of the watcher and the personality of the players whom he is describing, such as the fear felt by the Australian night-watchman Frank Ward during the 1938 Ashes Test at Trent Bridge when he described the lower-order batsman as facing the bowling of Ken Farnes through 'blinking eyelids' (Kilburn, *The Yorkshire Post*, 1938), or the unselfishness shown by Maurice Leyland for his country when 'sacrificing all safety to the quest for quick runs' for England in their 1937 Test against New Zealand (Kilburn, *The Yorkshire Post*, 1937), or the regal air he gives to Don Bradman in describing his upright stance at the wicket as 'a monarch surveying his all' (Kilburn, *In Search of Cricket*, 1937, p115).

There is a distinct difference between this and the writing of Kilburn's predecessor Alfred Pullin – who wrote under the pseudonym 'Old Ebor'. Pullin's writing style was a representation of what Kilburn's more aesthetic style evolved from. Pullin would generally stick to the statistics of the game at hand as a guide from which to write his report of the day's play and would rarely, when describing a batsman's play for example, stray far from a direct style, which offered little in terms of extra aesthetic detail:

Hurst, the other bowler, kept too good a length for scoring purposes for a few overs, but Vine eventually hit him for a couple of fours off successive balls (Pullin, *Yorkshire Evening Post*, August 30, 1921).
Bowley at length went for Wilson, hitting him twice to the boundary (Pullin, *Yorkshire Evening Post*, August 30, 1921).

Holmes was first to get into action with a four to leg and a four cut in separate overs from Sibbles, while Sutcliffe's first hits, beyond a single, were cut for two and a leg stroke for three off Macdonald (Pullin, *Yorkshire Evening Post*, August 4, 1928).

There were disappointments in the England batting – as usual. Mr. Maclaren played forward at the dropping ball which Mr. Trumble favours, and shovelled it – we can think of no better word – back to the bowler (Pullin, *The Yorkshire Post*, June 30, 1899).

With strong emphasis, Raymond Williams suggests in his *Marxism and Literature* (1977, p166) that *all* meaning in texts is 'produced' rather than merely 'expressed', and that 'There are indeed crucial variations in the methods of its production, from a relatively complete reliance on already established meanings to a relatively complete reworking of available meanings and the discovery of new combinations of meanings' (p166). In a cricket writing context, Pullin seems to rely much more on the 'already established' meanings of the signs he uses in his writing, whereas Kilburn is far more extravagant, latching on to every opportunity to take advantage of his descriptive gifts, and creates a picture for the reader, via a 'reworking of the available meanings' of the actions and emotions of the match about which they are reading. Where Pullin describes Sutcliffe's 'neatly turned stroke' (*Yorkshire Evening Post*, August 4, 1928) and 'sweeping hook to leg for 4' (*Yorkshire Evening Post*, August 14, 1926), Kilburn described a similar action as: 'Sutcliffe hooked a majestically contemptuous four in Watt's first over, and Yorkshire were away on a joyous journey' (Kilburn, *The Yorkshire Post*, July 5, 1937). Where in 1928 Pullin noted Maurice Leyland's arrival at the crease as being 'particularly cordial' (*Yorkshire Evening Post*, August 4, 1928), in 1935 Kilburn took three paragraphs to portray the atmosphere at Bradford in a thrilling match between Yorkshire and Kent:

Nearer and nearer crept Yorkshire to their haven, quieter and more breathless became the spectators between each ball, so that staccato clapping greeted every run and clapping changed to delirious, hoarse cheering whenever there came a boundary.

At quarter-past five pandemonium broke loose for [a] full five frantic seconds for at that point Sutcliffe put Wright away to the leg boundary and so completed a century worthy to stand with any in his glorious career.

At 185 bitter blows fell upon Yorkshire, for in two balls Sutcliffe and Verity were out, and an agonising silence came with Macaulay to the wicket. Within two overs it was over, Sellers pulling Freeman for four to settle the business, and never was [a] boundary more thankfully cheered by chronically-excited spectators (Kilburn, *The Yorkshire Post*, June 4, 1935).

It is this use of an aesthetic style that Kilburn used to evolve and develop cricket writing into a form which fully complies with the suggestions of what constitutes 'literature' – as language used at its fullest stretch. In doing so, he also assured that his interwar writing became autonomous and viable for anthological representation – another aspect of this study's definition of 'literature'.

We may now, therefore, have established that Kilburn's writing style is far more aesthetic than his predecessor at *The Yorkshire Post*, but why exactly does this mean that his writing is literature? It has also been established that Kilburn uses language 'at its fullest stretch' (Lodge, 1977 in Hall, 1979, p34) and as such each one of his works is able to stand alone by itself as an autonomous piece of writing, however, there is a stronger argument as to why this constitutes 'literature' and it involves Roland Barthes's 'reality effect' (in Furst, 1992, pp134-141) in descriptions.

Kilburn, using his aesthetic writing style, likes description – 'description' and 'aesthetic' seem to go hand-in-hand – and it is in descriptions within literature – specifically realist literature – that Barthes suggests we often find what he calls 'notations', 'which no function (not even the most indirect) will allow us to justify' (1992, p135). He uses an example of 'Flaubert, describing the room occupied by Madame Aubain, Félicité's mistress'. Flaubert writes that 'on an old piano, under a barometer, there was a pyramid of boxes and cartons', and Barthes suggests that the author 'like so many others, produce *notations* (data, descriptive details)' (p135), and that these many notations combine to 'constitute an indication of characterisation or atmosphere, and so can finally' – by an analyst – 'be salvaged as part of the structure' (p135). However, analysts are often left with these unjustifiable notations. Barthes goes on to suggest that:

These details are scandalous (from the point of view of structure), or, even more disturbingly, they seem to be allied with a kind of narrative *luxury*, profligate to the extent of throwing up 'useless' details and increasing the cost of narrative information. So... [in the above example from Flaubert] there seems to be no such end in view to justify the reference to the barometer, an object which is neither incongruous nor significant, and which, therefore, at first sight, seems not to belong to the domain of the *notable*. (Barthes, 1992, in Furst (eds), 1992, pp135-136).

Kilburn seems often to write with what Barthes described as a 'narrative luxury' (1992, p135), adding extra depth and detail to descriptions which were not, at least regarding the overall structure and narrative of the piece, necessarily needed.

Whilst this may make his work appear more 'literary', it also significantly shifts the focus of his writing away from that of journalism. Journalism is all about writing within a restricted space, a certain amount of column inches, therefore meaning strict word counts are part-and-parcel of being a journalist (Andrews, 2005, Pape & Featherstone, 2005). Tobin (1990, p59) suggests that 'the fewer the number of signs to choose from, and the more multi-purposeful or potentially polysemic this limited number of signs is, the easier his [the writer's] task: thus, placing the burden of the communicative act on the inferential abilities

of the decoder'. Journalism is the opposite of this. It is all about getting across the maximum amount of information in the fewest number of words and leaving possible inferences down to a minimum. Whilst Kilburn does adhere to this, he does not from a journalistic sense. He often forgoes some of his precious word count, substituting it for a stylistic, descriptive discourse. For example, when describing the dismissal of Northamptonshire's Peter Nelson against Yorkshire at Peterborough in 1938, Kilburn wrote: 'Nelson edged [Hedley] Verity on to his pads and thence gently into the hands of short leg' (*The Yorkshire Post*, July 16, 1938). Similar to Barthes's analysis of the Flaubert sentence, we, too, can break this line down part-by-part, starting with everything that the sentence actually needs. 'Nelson', 'Verity' and 'short leg' are the characters involved in the event and so are therefore crucial, the 'edging' and 'on to his pads' represent the mode of dismissal and are, likewise, important. However, is 'thence gently into the hands' needed? It adds nothing to the overall structure of the narrative, and certainly the fact that the ball went 'thence gently into the hands' of short leg does not affect the outcome of the game in any way. Considering, also, that in the very next paragraph Kilburn describes the very similar dismissal of Maurice Dunkley as: 'Dunkley, who was caught by Sutcliffe at short leg', it almost proves how unnecessary the 'thence gently into the hands' really was in the previous description. It is an unjustifiable notation and an example of Kilburn writing with a 'narrative luxury'.

Other examples can be found with regularity throughout Kilburn's writings, usually regarding the shots of batsmen he admires or are playing in a particularly emphatic or notable way: 'Sutcliffe hooked a majestically contemptuous four' (*The Yorkshire Post*, July 5, 1937) is a perfect example. It is highly unlikely that Sutcliffe himself consciously thought in the split-second before the ball reached his head that he was going to hook the ball in a 'majestically contemptuous' way, in fact the hook shot which he played looked, in all likelihood, exactly the same as every hook shot he played throughout a multi-decade-long career. A journalist would not waste precious words with the extra 'majestically contemptuous' description when 'he hooked for four' would do, but Kilburn used his narrative luxury to add extra information that did not otherwise have any effect on the overall structure on the piece chronicling Yorkshire's first day against Surrey at Bradford in 1937.

A Cricketing Mythology

This sub-section regards cricketing mythology, and ties in with the 'literature' definition as set out earlier by acknowledging further the need for 'literature' to be 'fictive' and 'creative'. First it is important to outline what exactly is meant by 'mythology' in this sense. Raymond

Williams (1976) certainly believes that the task of defining 'myth' and 'mythology', along with most words concerning the academic fields of sociology and cultural studies, comes with its difficulties. He states that it has evolved into what is 'now both a very significant and a very difficult word' (p208), and outlines what he believes are, from an academic perspective, its four main definitions:

... it has been used negatively as a contrast to fact, history... and science...; has become involved with the difficult modern senses of *imagination*, *creative* and *fiction*; and has been used both to illustrate and to analyse 'human nature' in a distinctively post-Christian sense... Meanwhile, outside this range of ideas, it has the flat common sense of a false (often deliberately false) belief or account (Williams, R, 1976, pp208-209).

The task becomes doubly difficult, and potentially confusing, when it is considered that Kilburn likes to reference mythologies from other cultures, like his ancient Greek references to Tantalus – a son of Zeus who is placed in a pool of water underneath a fruit tree, whereby the fruit above him and the water below are eternally just out of reach (Leeming, 2005) – in describing the frustrations of a rainy day at Chesterfield (*The Yorkshire Post*, July 17, 1939) or how he compared the ability of Yorkshire bowlers Verity and Macaulay to exploit the help of a turning pitch to force nine Kentish wickets to fall for 33 runs at Bradford to that of the ancient Greek La'mian War (Howatson, 2011): 'Macaulay and Verity turned from the innocuous to the demoniac, [and] took every advantage offered by the wicket, now exposed in all its Lamian evil, and became unplayable' (*The Yorkshire Post*, June 4, 1935). It ought to be pointed out that this continued reference to Greek mythology is likely due to the era of his upbringing. As an educated man – he went to university in Sheffield (Hamilton, 2008) – it is of little surprise that Kilburn uses classical allusions in his writing, for the education of the time was very much intertwined with the classics, and it was shown in the era's wider literature (Cunningham, 1988).

However, our concern lies not with Kilburn's reference to other mythology, his classical allusions, but a mythology of his *own* creation. As defined by the *Oxford Companion to Classical Literature* it suggests, quite simply, that 'Myths are traditional tales' (Howatson, 2011), and span sub-genres that include sagas, 'When stories of this general kind are based on some great historical or purportedly historical event (the Siege of Troy, the Return of the Children of Heracles)'; legends, 'when they are short narratives which are fictional but attached to a real person or place and given a fairly realistic setting, as for example the stories of the early kings of Rome'; or folk-tales, 'simple narratives of adventure, often containing elements of ingenious trickery and of magic, perhaps involving superhuman creatures.'

Herbert Sutcliffe is one such player; in fact, during the interwar era of Kilburn's career, he is *the* player, the main hero, the one to whom everybody looks when all else fails. It is in such phrases as 'in every way Sutcliffe was Yorkshire on this Thursday of August' (*The Yorkshire Post*, August 9, 1935, *In Search of Cricket*, 1937, p61, *Sweet Summers*, 2008, p255) that his importance to Kilburn's narrative begins to become clear.

Kilburn, however, was not the first to create a cricketing mythology within his own writing, for Neville Cardus was doing precisely that in the decade before Kilburn joined *The Yorkshire Post*. John Arlott wrote a special tribute to Cardus in the 1965 edition of *Wisden* where he outlined as much, writing that the:

Cardus of the years shortly after the First World War first brought to [cricket writing] the qualities of personalization, literary allusion and imagery. By such methods as presenting the contest between bowler and batsman as a clash not only of skills but of characters, he created something near to a mythology of the game (Arlott, 1965, in Green, 1984, p320).

The best evidence for *Kilburn's* mythologizing of cricket writing lies with his extended use of players as characters. The team represents a full cast list for each and every match, the players have specific roles within the narrative, based usually on their own performance, with the best players, the ones who perform well constantly, earning recurring roles as the heroes of the pieces.

This is an idea which Barthes outlines in his *Mythologies* (1957), and specifically within a chapter which concerns a sporting event: "The Tour de France as Epic" (pp122-133). He suggests that, much in the same way as Kilburn creates of Sutcliffe a mythical being, the mere mentioning of his name drawing heroic (in a cricketing sense) connotations, so too do journalists of cycling – specifically of the Tour de France – use cyclists as carriers of greatness, as cultural symbols or icons. He suggests that the great cyclists' names are what carry the connotations.

[T]hey account in one and the same syllable for a superhuman value and an utterly human intimacy which the journalist approaches familiarly, a little the way the Latin poets approached the intimacy of Caesar or Maecenas. In the cyclist's diminutive there is that mixture of servility, admiration and prerogative which posits the people as a voyeur of its gods (Barthes, 1957, p123).

Where Barthes is not particularly clear is in *how* these cyclists' names became to represent so much – whether it was merely through the winning of the Tour de France and being endowed with greatness by the epic nature of the race itself, or whether it was a mixture of the race's connotations and the way journalists wrote about the cyclists.

In the case of Kilburn, it is very much the case that it was he who created the mythology around Sutcliffe, through his writing. Of course, it helped that Sutcliffe scored the mountain of runs that he did, but it was Kilburn's interpretation of Sutcliffe's achievements which lead to his name becoming synonymous with greatness on the cricket field. Regardless of the catalyst for this phenomenon within cycling writing, what is common between Sutcliffe and the cyclists is that, as Barthes wrote, '...the racer's Name is both nutriment and ellipsis that it forms the chief figure of a veritable poetic language, making legible a world in which description is finally useless' (p122). Quite simply, the greatness of the athlete is so much, the mythology surrounding them so great, that a conventional lexicon simply cannot describe their awesomeness – the only suitable adjective to describe such an amazing being is that of the athletes' own name.

The last section before the conclusion in this study looks specifically into Kilburn's use of Sutcliffe as a character within his writing, therefore greater analysis of that particular player shall wait until then, however there are others on whom Kilburn places great importance. Alongside Sutcliffe, fellow Yorkshire batsman Maurice Leyland has a chapter reserved for him in *In Search of Cricket* (1937). Being a selection of his early *Yorkshire Post* pieces, of his own collating, gives a sense of the admiration for all those featured in his collection. He described Leyland as a 'cricketing character who would not have been negligible in any age' and that 'In him the crowd has a friend, one who suffers as they do from the boredom of safety-first batting and unimaginative bowling, and he does his best to relieve us of either' (p64). Australian Don Bradman also features, as one who never 'dabble[s] in the prohibited lands of uncertainty' on his way to amassing 'huge scores' thanks to his 'immeasurably superior' timing from a starting position at the wicket, where he 'stands upright, creating no impression of tenseness and strain, simply as a monarch surveying his all' (pp112-115). Kilburn's cast list features players whose traits stay with them as long as they are part of the ongoing mythology – such lavish praise and intricate detailing helps, no doubt, in producing anthological material, in much the same way as one would read about the gods of ancient Greece.

Changing Innings Part Two: 'The cricketer's England'

In the very first piece of his *In Search of Cricket* (1937), Kilburn wrote of how 'cricketers are products of their environment and grow because of the impulse of their setting', rather than being influenced by the wider world. In the psychological debate between 'nature' and 'nurture', Kilburn's opinion on the development of cricketers would see him advocate 'nurture', but with a slight twist. The twist is that whilst he believes that players are 'nurtured' by the environment in which they grow up, the environmental effects stretch only

as far as the boundary of their county of birth. Nothing from outside those walls affects, according to Kilburn, a player's upbringing. It is as if cricketers are the 'children' of their counties. Whilst the Kent batsman Frank Woolley, for example, is suggested below to have been influenced by the 'calm maturity of sunlit Kentish meadows', the way in which Kilburn writes of him suggests that this is actually a hereditary trait. Kent, for Kentish cricketers, is the nursery, home, or family environment, in which its 'cricketing children' are born, and so are therefore destined for Kentish traits or, perhaps, genetics. In fact, in another, separate, feature in *In Search of Cricket* (1937) entitled 'Kentish Men', Kilburn suggests exactly that: 'When cricket was in its swaddling clothes, Tonbridge came to know the game, and to-day it is a nursery for Kentish cricketers' (p18). In that first feature, entitled 'A pilgrimage for the faithful', Kilburn writes:

To know Woolley at the crease is to know the calm maturity of sunlit Kentish meadows, to watch Tate shambling to the wicket is to meet the sunburned countryman plodding a brave way across Sussex Downs, to contemplate Arthur Mitchell in the acquisition of an unsmiling, purposeful century is to appreciate the hard, unyielding Yorkshire hills which stand so sure of themselves and of their strength.

You do not make a cricketer only with bat and ball; a machine can be induced to deliver a ball, another to strike it, but that is not cricket or the essence of a cricketer. The cricketer is made from within, and his spiritual power is no conglomeration of surrounding atmosphere. To know cricket, therefore, is to know something of the world in which cricket is played, and many less worthy pilgrimages have been made than that which leads through the cricketer's England. (J. M. Kilburn, 1937, *In Search of Cricket*, pp9-10)

Kilburn specifically states that a cricketer is made up of 'no conglomeration of the surrounding atmosphere', yet suggests that the features of three separate players' cricketing styles are directly related to the landscape from where they were brought up. It seems contradictory to suggest that a 'purposeful' Arthur Mitchell century 'is to appreciate the hard, unyielding Yorkshire hills' when the 'cricketer is made from within', unless by 'within' Kilburn is suggesting that the cricketers are themselves part of the earth of the county of their birth. 'Surrounding atmosphere', in this instance, represents not the cricketer's immediate surroundings, but the wider environment, the country which stretches beyond the county's boundary walls – a cricketer, according to Kilburn, is not influenced by anything from outside, in the example of Woolley, Kent, or, in the example of Mitchell, Yorkshire. Bateman (2009) suggests similar, specifically regarding Neville Cardus's very similar portrayal of Woolley:

Woolley's batting embodies the ideal of a modest and unselfconscious revelation of beauty. In doing so Woolley posed a theoretical problem: the apparently effortless aristocratic poise of his batting was nothing less than a bodily disruption to an established aesthetic schema in which rigid social distinctions were projected into the cricket field. Nevertheless, the conceptual problem posed by Woolley's batting could be effaced by strongly identifying him with his Kentish background. ... Safely situated within the impervious walls of the 'Garden of England', Woolley was

supposedly aesthetically autonomous and thus immune to wider social and economic forces (Bateman, 2009, p112-113).

Everything inside those county boundaries is part of the cricketer, ingrained into him, like family genetics. Writing during a period in cricket's history when it was only for the county of one's birth – and England – that one could play first class cricket, Kilburn was able to latch on to this sense of hereditary lineage and belonging in writing of the Yorkshire team as a family collective. He consistently refers to the Yorkshire team as not simply 'Yorkshire', the 'Yorkshire players' or the 'Yorkshire team', but the 'Yorkshiremen', in the ultimate act of family incorporation and identity:

'... for all the trouble the wicket seemed to give the Yorkshiremen might have been playing at Worcester in the middle of heat wave.'

(Kilburn, *The Yorkshire Post*, Thursday July 6, 1935)

'For the remainder of the afternoon, true Yorkshiremen slid into somnolent peace, lulled and soothed by such gentle clapping as announced a boundary or marked the attainment of such milestones as Sutcliffe's 50 and the 100 up.'

(Kilburn, *The Yorkshire Post*, Thursday July 6, 1935)

'The 192 runs required must have seemed a monumental total to the Yorkshiremen at lunch, but for every Woolley there is a Leyland.'

(Kilburn, *The Yorkshire Post*, Tuesday June 4, 1935)

These players *are* Yorkshire, and Kilburn stated as much when Herbert Sutcliffe scored a double century against Leicestershire: 'When any batsman makes 200 the day must be accounted solely his, and in every way Sutcliffe was Yorkshire on this Thursday of August' (Kilburn, *The Yorkshire Post*, August 9, 1935 & *In Search of Cricket*, 1937, p61 & *Sweet Summers*, 2008, p255).

This study suggests that the importance Kilburn places on the nurturing of 'home grown' talent from within each individual player's home county is no coincidence, and can be read as a means of Kilburn fighting what LeMahieu (1988, p228) outlines as the 1930s' development of a 'common culture'. The huge growth in media consumption throughout the decade – national daily newspaper circulations, generally, rose massively (Williams, 1996, 1997) and LeMahieu (1988) specifically highlights the growth of radio listeners, noting that 'licences increased from around 3 million in 1930 to almost 9 million at the end of the decade' (p229) – lead to a standardising of certain media forms. The issue of American influences on cinema during the decade highlights best why Kilburn is so keen to see a divided country, at least in terms of cricketing style and development. During the 1930s,

America maintained its often resented presence in British cultural life. Even government intervention in 1927 could not halt American domination of British cinema. 'It is perfectly simple, even in these days of protection,' the British film critic C.A. Lejeune wrote in 1935, 'for an Englishman to go regularly once a week to the cinema without ever seeing an English film' (LeMahieu, 1988, p230).

This blurring of the boundaries between cultures, a sure sign of the world evolving into its modern form, was a worry for Kilburn. If one were not able to differentiate a Kentish batsman, whose game evoked 'the calm maturity of sunlit Kentish meadows' from a Sussex player 'shambling to the wicket' in such a way so as 'to meet the sunburned countryman plodding a brave way across Sussex Downs', or to differentiate those from an 'unsmiling, purposeful century' by a cricketer who evoked the 'unyielding Yorkshire hills which stand so sure of themselves and of their strength' (Kilburn, 1937, *In Search of Cricket*, pp9-10) it would be to lose something of the identity of cricket, or what Kilburn goes on to call 'the cricketer's England'.

The Evolution of 'Old Ebor'

It is important to note that all of these literary characteristics did not just happen with the hiring of Kilburn, for there was an evolutionary process taking place during Alfred Pullin's tenure, despite his natural style being a rather direct one.

In what is almost a glimpse of the descriptive detail for which Kilburn would later become known, Pullin did, only for the most exciting passages of play, expand on his descriptive vocabulary: such as in describing the reception of the crowd to Maurice Leyland's arrival at the crease as 'particularly cordial' (*Yorkshire Evening Post*, August 4, 1928) and, batting for England against Australia, describing a Sutcliffe boundary as a 'sweeping hook to leg for 4' (*Yorkshire Evening Post*, August 14, 1926) before the wicket of Jack Hobbs fell to a 'wild slash across a full toss' (*Yorkshire Evening Post*, August 14, 1926). These glimpses of extra aesthetic detail, and a sense of *The Yorkshire Post's* willingness to evolve along with the rest of the newspaper industry, which, as we saw in the previous section, had by the early twentieth century undergone a myriad of changes (Ensor, 1936, Cranfield, 1978, Williams, 1997, Harcup, 2004), can be seen through a gradual increase in both the uses of extra aesthetic detail from Pullin, as well as the newspaper's design. The 'enlarged standfirst' which became so important for Kilburn's interwar literary style was being used, albeit sparingly, during the later years of Pullin's tenure at the newspaper. The 1928 Ashes Tests against Australia and 1926 Roses match against Lancashire both featured 'enlarged standfirsts' before 'Old Ebor's' by-line and copy – as shown in figures five and six.

This seemed not to have quite the same effect as Kilburn's writing would later. Due to the style of Pullin, some of the information within the 'enlarged standfirst' was repeated rather similarly, however it does prove the evolutionary process: the report of the first day's play of the 1899 Test versus Australia at Headingley featured no standfirst at all (shown in figure four) and the 'news' event of the day – the match itself and the huge crowds attracted to it

– featured as the main part of the story in a writing style not nearly equivalent to that employed by Kilburn from 1934 (Pullin, *The Yorkshire Post* and *Yorkshire Evening Post* 1899, 1926 and 1928).

Clearly, in the decade before Kilburn arrived at *The Yorkshire Post*, the editor, Arthur Mann (Hopps, 1993, Hamilton, 2008), was already toying with the design of the newspaper and the inclusion of an 'enlarged standfirst'. Therefore, because Pullin's writing style did not necessarily compliment the use of an 'enlarged standfirst' quite as much as it might have done, it seems as though Mann, upon Pullin's departure, specifically set out to fill the vacancy with a *writer*, rather than a journalist.

Summary

In this section the interwar writing of J.M. Kilburn at *The Yorkshire Post* has been analysed from a literary perspective, as opposed to the journalistic viewpoint adopted in the previous section. First outlined was what this study takes to be 'literature', before offering numerous examples as to how the style used by Kilburn conforms to this definition. 'Literature' is taken to be pieces of fictive, creative, *written* work, whereby 'language has been used at its fullest stretch' (Hall, 1979, p34) to create autonomous, timeless writings.

A literary style known as 'narrative luxury' has been outlined as being used by Kilburn in his writing. This comes from Barthes's 'reality effect' in descriptions (1992, pp134-141), whereby writers use what he calls 'notations' in describing scenes within their writing, though often include *unjustifiable* notations – extra bits of detail whose absence would not otherwise affect the outcome of the story. This is especially interesting in Kilburn's case, for journalists would usually be very conscious about their word count (Andrews, 2005, Pape & Featherstone, 2005), but he, being a *writer* and not a journalist, is happy to use extra words in literary descriptions.

Regarding the 'creative', 'fictive' aspects of this study's definition of 'literature', it is noted how Kilburn uses a literary style to create his own 'cricketing mythology', mainly through his use of characterisation, which extended to entire counties possessing, to him, certain cricketing characteristics. The literary style which appears in *The Yorkshire Post* was not solely down to the hiring of Kilburn, however, as there is evidence to suggest that the editor, Arthur Mann, was experimenting with the design of the newspaper before his hiring, during the final years of Alfred 'Old Ebor' Pullin's career.

Figure 5. *The Yorkshire Evening Post*, August 14, 1926. England v Australia at The Oval, London (report written by Alfred 'Old Ebor' Pullin).

CHEAP WICKETS AFTER LUNCH.

HENDREN AND WOOLLEY FAIL.

KEEN AUSTRALIAN ATTACK FACED WITH CONFIDENCE BY SUTCLIFFE.

A VERY moderate start is the best that can be said of England's first innings in the final Test match at the Oval to-day. Three for 108 at lunch was poor business and seven for 231 half an hour before tea was infinitely worse.

Hobbs was first to go—bowled by a full toss—and Woolley and Hendren followed him at 91 and 105 respectively.

A characteristic innings by Chapman improved matters, but the outlook was far from bright when Sutcliffe, whose steadiness had proved of the greatest value, was out for 76.

The wicket was described as perfect, having dried rapidly under the influence of wind and sun. Strudwick, for Brown, was the only change in the English team.

THE GAME DESCRIBED BY "OLD EBOR."

KENNINGTON OVAL, Saturday.

The wet and gloom of yesterday disappeared during the night, and this morning the great Test match was begun in real cricket weather. The sun has been shining brilliantly for hours, and with a cool westerly breeze the conditions are ideal. That is to begin with, which at the moment is all that matters.

The usual yarns of the stunt writers about night vigils and early morning queues make strange reading when compared with the actual scene within the ground. Writing less than an hour before the time for play to begin, I am able to say that the attendance is not as large as would be seen an hour before a Surrey v. Yorkshire match. There has been no crush at either the public or the members' turnstiles.

Doubtless there will be a big crowd later on, but at the moment there is none of the excitement predicted. Possibly some of the milder order of enthusiasts think it will be sufficient to take a day or two off to see the match during the next two or three weeks.

OVER THE TURNSTILES.

Some of the Australian cricketers were out inspecting the pitch before half-past ten. Seen through field-glasses, the wicket looked good enough, but one has to wait until the play itself to form an opinion upon it. I am told that the whole of the wicket was covered, and therefore protected from the rain of yesterday.

By the way, the arrangements at the Oval for the entrance of players and their luggage were shown in a bad light this morning. I saw one of the England players having to lift his heavy cricket bag over a turnstile, and then clamber over himself, and since this I am told that some of the Australians had to climb over a turnstile because there was no private entrance available.

The question of the wicket-keeper has been settled by the inclusion of Strudwick. Brown's thumb was examined, and while it did not prevent him batting and making


HOBBS GETS IN.

OVER THE TURNSTILES.

THEN SAYS: "LET GET HIM OUT."

So many members tried same time around about 1 and Oldfield, tired of waiting at the turnstile (says the "Gilligan", an England selection), and was stopped likewise, and was stopped, and Gilligan was Macartney was not so found him wandering down the taxi-cabs, but even K found he had a big job in "Here's a nice thing, "I can't get Macartney. Ultimately, "Mac." was

KEEPING HIS



Sutcliffe was 40 not out at


way as Gregory and Oldfield him in, and then remarked we get him out."

"I have won the toss." The of the telegram A. P. F. C. and sent to his wife at Hythe.

The first member of the arrive at the Oval was M. walked in at the public friend, and was all smiles cheerily to the crowd who.

An early arrival was Lord presence was a happy sight recovered from the illness while at Canterbury. C. and Ryder walked out to the pitch at 10.30, and the their inspection by Mar groundsman.

AN ACCEPTABLE



THE SCORE BOARD.

ENGLAND.	
Hobbs, b Mailey	37
Sutcliffe, b Mailey	76
Woolley, b Mailey	18
Hendren, b Gregory	8
A. P. F. Chapman, st Oldfield b Mailey	49
G. T. S. Stevens, c Andrews b Mailey	17
Rhodes, not out	13
Geary, run out	9
Tate, b Grimmett	23
Extras	11
Total	266

Hobbs claimed 25 and Sutcliffe 5.

Gregory had bowled seven overs for 9 runs when he retired, Grimmett crossing over and taking his place.

Certain advertisers are proving a nuisance. They have flags flying on high with string attachments below, and outside the ground. As these float about they cast shadows on the cricket ground that are both disconcerting and objectionable.

When Grimmett crossed over he had Andrews at silly point and Richardson at short mid on, both close in. He so blocked the avenues that nothing was scored off his first three overs.

A "WILD SLASH."

Sutcliffe was well tied up by him, but, getting a chance against Mailey, he hit his first four, a leg boundary stroke. With a sweeping hook to leg for 4 off Grimmett, Hobbs made the score 50 after 55 minutes play. His own figure was 35 and Sutcliffe 12. Three runs later the first wicket fell.

Hobbs, who had been playing the leg strokes admirably, made what I can only describe as a wild slash across a full toss from Mailey, and, missing it, was bowled. This was after barely an hour's play.

I recall the fact that on the last Australian tour, when Hobbs and Sutcliffe batted all through one day, Hobbs was out the following morning through missing a full toss—the first ball delivered.

Woolley was the next comer, and saw Sutcliffe bring off a very smart cut off Mailey for three. Biding his time, Woolley

Figure 6. The Yorkshire Evening Post, August 4, 1928. Lancashire v Yorkshire at Old Trafford, Manchester (report written by Alfred 'Old Ebor' Pullin).

FAULTLESS CENTURY PARTNERSHIP.

Then Wickets Fall Fast.

THRILLS FOR CROWD OF 20,000 AT OLD TRAFFORD.

A BIG crowd, assembled at Old Trafford to-day for the opening of the game between Lancashire and Yorkshire, saw Holmes and Sutcliffe score 134 for the first wicket. Both played faultless cricket in their fifty-fifth three-figure partnership, and Sutcliffe from the start scored the quicker of the two.

This fine send off for Yorkshire was discounted by the dismissal of Mitchell, Leyland and Barber for the addition of only 55 runs. Duckworth, the Lancashire wicket-keeper, was responsible for the dismissal of three batsmen.

The attendance after lunch was estimated at 20,000, and the crowd followed with traditional keenness the fortunes of a game which may go a long way toward deciding whether Lancashire are champions for the third successive season.

LANCASHIRE KEEPER'S SMART WORK.

(By "Old Ebor.")

OLD TRAFFORD, Saturday.

Lancashire's rush to the top of the championship table has made the interest in the return game with Yorkshire keener even than usual, and there must have been 5,000 present to see the opening ball bowled. The weather at the start was fine and warm. It was surprising to see A. N. Other as No. 11 in the Lancashire team. The explanation was that R. Tyldesley injured one of his hands in a charity match during the week and was unable to play, and the choice of substitute had not been made. With the exception of Tyldesley, Lancashire had their full side. Yorkshire included Barber, Oldroyd standing down. Captain Worsley won the toss, so Yorkshire had the opportunity of batting first, which was not the case in the first match at Bramall Lane, at Whitsuntide. On that occasion Colonel Green won the spin, his side scored 239 for six wickets in six hours on the first day, and finished the next day at 235. Yorkshire replied with 473 and took first innings points.

Holmes and Sutcliffe began batting at half-past eleven, being faced by Macdonald and Sibbles. It was a cautious opening. Holmes was the first to get into action with a four to leg and a four out in separate

which Holmes had made 54 and Sutcliffe 71. Holmes had hit seven four's. In Oldroyd's absence Mitchell came in at this stage.

Mitchell got a four to the slip off Macdonald, and at a quarter to three, when play had lasted two-and-a-half hours, 150 was signalled with one wicket down. At this point the official return showed that 14,215 had paid at the gate, so that with members about 18,000 were present.

Mitchell at 152 was out caught behind the wicket off Macdonald, though apparently he had a doubt as to whether he had touched the ball.

LEYLAND'S HARD LUCK.

Leyland had a particularly cordial reception when he came in next. He was speedily the victim of bad luck, for, after playing the ball in the direction of slip boundary, he turned for a third run but was sent back by Sutcliffe, and Hopwood returning the ball sharply to the wicket-keeper he was run out. This made the score 161 for three, and the fine first-wicket start was discounted.

Barber was the next comer, this being his eleventh match of the season for the County. He soon found the off boundary with a fine shot from Macdonald's bowling. In the Australian's following over Barber had another good four, this time to the on, and Sutcliffe sent his seventh four to leg in the same over.

At 189—an addition of 28 for the fourth wicket—Barber was snapped at the wicket off Rushton. He was followed by Robinson.

YORKSHIRE.

Holmes, c Duckworth b Macdonald	54
Sutcliffe, not out	113
Mitchell, c Duckworth b Macdonald	7
Leyland, run out	4
Barber, c Duckworth b Rushton	10

THE HUNGRY DENBY.

GIANT PIE

1½ Hours to

When the giant, nicely cooked to-day, hungrily waiting to be eaten, the dish refused to budge. It was not until after that the pie was got off in triumph round the 50,000 people had gathered.

When the last, safely fixed in its place to give the brown colouring had a whitewash brush, bakers of Denby Dale relief. Their part, the world's biggest, settled down to await faith in the oven.

Said Mr. Heap, the "Everything has a plan. During the pie out regularly, as splendidly. So far, will be as good as Denby Dale. It matters will be a few hours is inevitable with a

The huge pie dish of 100 cubic feet, was intervals during the the name of Whiteley of the oven, which building used in the mill. Butchers at kept Mr. Whiteley night, and a sum round the oven.

TILING

Every inspection all was right for the at 10 o'clock this who had made the of flour, two stones two cwt. of lard, we in sections, five feet

The bakers haul oven, and put the same way as a slate dove-tailed the joint work, and fully an laying of the crust

Then, amid the e pie was pulled back last three hours.

The ingredients near £100 as many was estimated the cent for 20,000 e tickets for pie we addition there was admission to the day is the Pie Field

There were 15,000 souvenir pie lorry loads of m with which to wash

Would-be pie-eat the village early to was a regular proc 'buses. Of course enters paid a soldier the oven, and there this encouraging.

The doctors say t and child had to be pie every day, the

DUCKWORTH'S DAY.



3.

'There are, however, one or two figures whom none could fail to recognise. Herbert Sutcliffe is unquestionably one of them.'

J.M. Kilburn, *In Search of Cricket*, 1937, p54

'Sutcliffe hooked a majestically contemptuous four in Watt's first over, and Yorkshire were away on a joyous journey...'

J.M. Kilburn, *The Yorkshire Post*, July 5, 1937

Herbert Sutcliffe

So far this study has considered the interwar writing of J.M. Kilburn for *The Yorkshire Post* firstly from a journalistic perspective and outlined how his writing does not totally conform to such a label, and secondly has considered his writing from a 'literary' perspective and highlighted some techniques and styles which are consistent with what this study defines as 'literature', and has taken the content of his writing to consider how he uses a literary style to portray regional ideals, specifically regarding modernism and the advancements in both technology and culture.

This chapter examines Kilburn's portrayal of the *individual* as a 'character', and as a vessel of his own, personal, social and cultural ideologies. There is, before the main content of the section, a need to make clear some terminology used throughout this chapter. When referring to 'characterisation', whilst the term is intended to be used along the same lines as one would when describing, say, an author of a novel when he creates his own characters, there is a slight difference in my use of 'characterisation' in that it comes with the qualification that Kilburn's 'characters' are not 'fictional' characters. Friend (2007) suggests

that '*fictional* characters are restricted to characters introduced in works of *fiction*' (p142, italics mine), and Thomasson (2003), likewise, notes that fictional characters are created by the author, and although they are created 'at a certain time', they 'lack a spatiotemporal location' (p138). Herbert Sutcliffe, the player to whom this section is mainly devoted, is not a fictional character, he is a real person who has had fictional *characteristics* added to his persona, through Kilburn's writing. The Herbert Sutcliffe who was one of cricket's most prolific batsmen of all-time, who scored one hundred first-class hundreds (Wright, 2004), is very much a real, tangible being – he, himself, does not lack spatiotemporal location, he is *real* – however, the 'majestically contemptuous' (Kilburn, *The Yorkshire Post*, July 1937) manner with which he graced his stroke-play, for example, is very much an abstract quality. It is this, the aura of Sutcliffe as created by Kilburn, which is under examination in this chapter.

In his book, *The Auden Generation* (1976), Samuel Hynes defined the 1930s as 'a time of crisis' (p12). The best way to outline exactly what he meant by this was, he thought, to quote a poem written by W.H. Auden around the middle of the decade, which posed in its verses the issues of 1930s Britain:

So in this hour of crisis and dismay,
What better than your strict and adult pen
Can warn us from the colours and the consolations,
The showy arid works, reveal
The squalid shadow of academy and garden,
Make action urgent and its nature clear?
Who give us nearer insight to resist
The expanding fear, the savaging disaster?
(Poem XXX ('August for the people and their favourite islands'), Auden, 1936,
pp65-66 in Hynes, 1976, p12)

Hynes suggests that in this poem Auden has created a 'different conception of the literary act' (p13), and has elevated the writer from that of one who is part of a creative, but passive, art form, to that of one whose literary profession aides in inspiring society to stand up to the crisis which is ongoing around them. Hynes goes on to outline this 1930s change by stating that a professional should:

By his pen – in his role as writer, and not simply as a citizen – he will make men aware of the need for action, and of what action means. His insight will give men the strength to resist their enemies, without and within. This is more than simply a moral theory of literature, it asserts a direct relation between literature and action in the public world; writing becomes a mode of action (Hynes, 1976, p13).

According to Hynes, by the 1930s, the writer is playing a very active role within society. Whilst falling short of propaganda, the writer is, through his work, helping to tackle the decade's 'crisis'. To do this, Hynes believes Auden was asking for, in his poem, young

writers of the generation to go beyond the aesthetic, 'he was asking for alternative *worlds*, worlds of the imagination which would consist in new, significant forms, and through which literature could play a moral role in a time of crisis' (p13). If we think back to the "A Cricketing Mythology" sub-section earlier in the thesis, and Barthes's suggestion that cycling writers ensure that the very names of the cyclists competing in the Tour de France are 'both nutriment and ellipsis that it forms the chief figure of a veritable poetic language, making legible a world in which description is finally useless' (p122), he is suggesting that these writers have created such an aura around these leading cyclists that conventional language is simply not enough to describe their godlike greatness. Therefore the only way to imagine their world of greatness is to use their names as portals to another world.

Barthes was writing about journalists from a slightly later period than J.M. Kilburn, however Kilburn uses a very similar technique. Hynes believed that the generation of writers to which Kilburn belonged, a generation which was 'born in England between 1900 and the First World War, who came of age in the 'twenties and lived through their early maturity during the Depression' (p9), had, because of this ability to transform the written word into an active piece by injecting morality into their work, special qualities. The question, therefore, is one of *how* Kilburn managed to make his cricket writing 'moral'. One way he did bring morality into his writing was via a symbolic ideal: the creation of what we would now call a 'celebrity', and, as is outlined in this study, a player to which Kilburn attached extra importance was the Yorkshire batsman, Herbert Sutcliffe.

However, to appreciate the differences of the sporting celebrity as created by J.M. Kilburn in the 1930s to that of the sporting celebrity to which society had just about become accustomed to, there is a need to outline what exactly the history of the sporting celebrity was up until this point. Whilst there were already examples of famous sporting names leading up to the interwar period, Whannel (2002) suggests that cricket's W.G. Grace was the very first sporting celebrity of the media age. Birley (1999, p107) described him as a 'hero-worshipped man' and Whannel (2002) as one who 'bridged the transition from pre-industrial cricket to the Edwardian age and occupied the ground of the emergence of modern sport and the modern media system' (p82). He even goes as far to suggest that Grace is 'probably the only pre-World War I sport performer who might be readily recognised by twenty-first-century readers' (p82) (a point that can be highlighted by the number of fans who attend Test matches in England dressed as the doctor, sporting his iconic bushy dark beard, hat and portly belly), for it wasn't until between the wars that 'the discourse of sporting heroism was firmly established' (p85).

Yet there remains a distinct difference to the outlandish, eccentric celebrity form of W.G. Grace to the status with which Kilburn imbued Herbert Sutcliffe. Whilst Grace was well known for his fine levels of performance in reaching the top of his sport, it was arguably his individual traits – his larger-than-life character earned him numerous, eccentric, anecdotes to his name – which has seen him go down as almost what one would describe as notorious. This is where Sutcliffe is different – he, like Grace, was a master of his own sport, but it is Kilburn's continual emphasis of the man's calmness and control, as will be outlined in depth, which marks Sutcliffe out as the ultimate in English ideals.

Kilburn's association with Herbert Sutcliffe stemmed no doubt from the fact that he was forced to spend much of his time watching him. Sutcliffe is one of the all-time greats of the game, even if his name may not now be household. He became just the seventh player to score one hundred first-class hundreds in a career that spanned from 1919-1945; he was 37-years old when he achieved the feat in 1932 (meaning that he kept playing until he was 50-years old); he took just 700 innings to reach the milestone, the quickest in history at that time (and, of the modern-day list which now totals twenty-five players, is still one of the quickest), and is comfortably under the number needed for arguably the game's most famous name to reach the milestone – W.G. Grace, who needed 1,113 innings (Wright, 2004, p214). Put simply, the more one is forced to watch a player, the more that has to be written about him, giving a greater scope for the development of the player's personality.

Kilburn essentially spells out as much within one of his reports – his account of the opening day's play in the second Test against South Africa at Lord's in 1935 – whereby he writes of South Africa's Bruce Mitchell: 'Mitchell has a little habit of pulling at the left shoulder of his shirt with his right hand, which remark indicates that we are coming to regard him as amongst the great ones of cricket, for only to these do we do the honour of noticing their mannerisms' (Kilburn, *The Yorkshire Post*, July 1, 1935). Given the intricacy of the description Kilburn gives of Herbert Sutcliffe – the extract is to come shortly – it serves as proof of Kilburn's opinion of the standing of Sutcliffe within the game.

Sutcliffe was still very much in his prime throughout the 1930s, making it somewhat unsurprising that he featured heavily in both Kilburn's reportage at the time, and the subsequent book which he published in 1937. As was mentioned in the introduction to this study, according to Matthew Engel – writing his tribute to Kilburn (in Hamilton, 2008) – Kilburn himself insisted that his best work came later in his career. Whether Kilburn's later work was indeed 'better' or not depends on the opinion of the reader, however some of the

tributes to Kilburn in Hamilton's *Sweet Summers* (2008) bare testament that his writing was, at least, slightly different later in life. David Frith, for example, said that Kilburn 'not only wrote with authority and elegance but in my enquiring mind he began to edge out Cardus as essayists go for the simple reason that he did not indulge himself in fantasy' (in Hamilton, 2008, p330). Richard Hutton described his writing as 'always authoritative and incisive yet restrained' (in Hamilton, 2008, p332), whilst John Woodcock suggested that 'Jim Kilburn wrote as he lived – with discipline, somewhat austere urbanity' (in Hamilton, 2008, p336). These sentiments seem to be at odds with a lot of Kilburn's writing from the 1934-1939 period, indeed, in the tributes, specific examples from his 1930s reporting are absent – understandably so given the ages of the tribute-writers, most of whom describe their earliest memories of Kilburn from the 1950s onwards – and only via his seemingly very popular *In Search of Cricket* (1937) is the work of Kilburn's interwar vintage ever mentioned.

Quite simply, and understandably, it seems as though Kilburn is remembered most fondly by his most recent work for *The Yorkshire Post*, which, by all accounts, was somewhat more restrained, authoritative and perhaps decisive than it was during the 1930s. However, this is what makes Kilburn of the 1930s such a fascinating study. As Engle points out in his tribute to the man: 'there is a freshness about it that could only come from a young writer' (in Hamilton, 2008, p346). He goes on to say that his early work is 'like a Yorkshire innings, full of textbook defensive shots leavened with the occasional perfectly-executed cover-drive... This represents masterful control of the language' (in Hamilton, 2008, p346). It is these flourishes, these 'perfectly-executed cover-drives', with which Kilburn adorned his early, interwar writing, that we find the material to analyse. It is this extra material, that is otherwise absent in, for example, Alfred Pullin's journalism earlier in the century, which holds the key for his writing to be considered 'literature' at all. In fact, the very presence of these 'perfectly-executed cover-drives' is in itself evidence of a 'narrative luxury' – the extra notations writers use which are unessential to the main aspect of the work, but aid in creating it as 'literature'. Below is the extract taken from Kilburn's *In Search of Cricket* (1937) concerning Herbert Sutcliffe:

Nine times out of ten the first ball will be outside off-stump, and just so often will Sutcliffe step across, bring his feet together with military precision, lift that beautiful bat high out of harm's way and gaze past point as the ball thuds into the wicket-keeper's gloves.

This padding-up announces as clearly as spoken words: 'My dear bowler, you are wasting your time: I am proposing to make a century to-day and I am certainly not going to jeopardize my chances by feeling for anything outside the off-stump.' The bowler is invariably heedless, but when Sutcliffe performs precisely the same operation at half-past five in the afternoon scepticism begins to depart.

Sutcliffe's appearance is, of course, in keeping with his character. He looks cool and calm, and he behaves coolly and calmly. The bowler who beats Sutcliffe's bat and misses the stumps by a 'coat of varnish' may save himself the trouble of throwing up his arms and calling to high heaven to witness the luck of the man. Sutcliffe will be quite unimpressed by such display. In all probability he will not even turn round to assure himself that the bails are still on. I have seen Sutcliffe beaten and morally bowled three times in six balls, yet at the end of the over he stood aside, leaned on his bat and crossed his legs in exactly the same way as when there are 200 chanceless runs to his name (Kilburn, *In Search of Cricket*, 1937, pp54-55).

The above extract reveals a lot about the writer's perception of Sutcliffe and his use of the batsman as a cultural symbol. His use of militaristic metaphor and the overtone of a batsman harbouring a certain calmness, yet still transcends into a complete seniority and power over the bowler, is clear. In this extract it is the batsman who possesses the power in the relationship between bat and ball, which is a reflection of Kilburn's general writing tendencies. He often imbues the batsman in the match with seniority – he is the one being served to, waited on, and it is he who deciphers what shall be done with the ball.

Therefore, in the batsman-bowler relationship, it is the one wielding the bat who usually takes on a greater importance, for example, in: 'Sutcliffe saw to it that Surrey's gifts were not neglected' (*The Yorkshire Post*, July 5, 1937), it is the Surrey bowlers whose bowling is being so dominated by Sutcliffe that they are taking the form of a 'gift' to the batsman; they are not just bad deliveries but, when offered to Sutcliffe, a batsman of such pedigree and class, represent offerings for more runs. In any situation involving one-way gift giving and receiving, it is those who are the recipients of the gift, the birthday-boy or wedding couple, who are of higher importance in the context of that situation. Similarly, in: 'Sutcliffe and Hutton are in such wonderful form just now that for them the beginnings of one day seem merely the continuation of yesterday's success; to them all bowling seems but fuel for their fires' (*The Yorkshire Post*, July 5, 1937) it is suggested that the 'gift' is, in this case, the 'fuel', which, of course, would be a gift if you were a fire, for its accelerant qualities help fires to burn higher, brighter and hotter. In a writer's modern-day lexicon, 'fuel for the fire' could be considered cliché, however Kilburn simply does not use cliché. In fact, as we have already seen in this study, he seems to go out of his way to be different. Therefore, in this instance, the use of the fuel/fire metaphor must have been used with careful consideration, especially since it is clear that, within the context of this piece of writing, it is not a 'lazy', 'throwaway' line, it is detail which adds to the image which he is attempting to create. In his fuel-fire metaphor, the 'fire' (the batsmen) clearly hosts the power in the situation, for it is the fuel which works for the fire's ultimate blossoming in a hierarchical mechanism that sees the lower-ranking fuel provide the means for the continuation and success of the fire.

Although appreciative of genuinely good pieces of bowling – when Essex dismissed Yorkshire for an unlikely 31 all out at Huddersfield in 1935 before scoring 334 in their own first innings and duly bowling the home side cheaply out again, for 91, to win by an innings and 204 runs, Kilburn described the bowling of Essex's Morris Nichols, who took eleven wickets and scored 146 runs in a day-and-a-half of cricket, as 'magnificent' (*In Search of Cricket*, 1937, p166) – Kilburn seems to reserve for Sutcliffe, when guilty of a misgiving or mistake, lack of concentration or brief lapse in calmness, a disappointment in his inability to prolong the ideal that the batsman portrays, for example, in: 'Sutcliffe fell from his own grace and edged a boundary that passed almost through the hands of first slip' (*The Yorkshire Post*, July 5, 1937), it is not the bowler who has beaten the batsman, it is the batsman who has failed to deal properly with what the bowler has 'served up'. If it was not clear Kilburn's hierarchy, which sees batsmanship at the top of a very rigid ranking within the game, through the descriptions of succeeding batsmen, then it becomes obviously evident when, at least when concerning Sutcliffe, the batsman is beaten by the bowler; it is not because of the good work on behalf of the bowler but because of the batsman's mistake. Similarly, when Len Hutton loses his wicket in a match against Hampshire in 1935 by edging the ball onto his own stumps, Kilburn first goes down the route of blaming the bad luck of the batsman for such a dismissal – it is generally considered that if a batsman 'plays on' in cricket, it is an unlucky way to lose one's wicket – before correcting himself and blaming Hutton, who is a player whose status matches that of Sutcliffe's, for a poorly-timed shot:

Hutton was out rather unluckily (at least it is a current fiction that a batsman is unlucky who mistimes a shot so as to edge the ball into his wicket), but Yorkshire could spare one batsman with the total assuming such vast proportions... (Kilburn, *The Yorkshire Post*, July 6, 1935)

This high status, and, upon the loss of their wicket, subsequent 'falling from grace', is not only reserved for Sutcliffe, but for other batsmen who, in Kilburn's view, deserve such status. Kent's Frank Woolley was one such player and when, in June 1935, Kent travelled to Bradford to face Yorkshire, Kilburn praised him like a visiting king: 'Woolley's batting we know to be above ordinary understanding, and this morning we marvelled'. The piece went on:

An unexpected pleasure and one of deep significance came to those who saw the start of play this morning, for with Ashdown to open the innings went Woolley, and straight away there was beauty in the air. Woolley and Ashdown had a task clearly before them, and that was to make as many runs as possible in the fleeting minutes during which the wicket slept quiescent beneath the hypnotism of the heavy roller.

The scheme was excellent in theory, but not even Kent's most sanguine supporters could have conceived the perfection of its execution. Woolley, of course, we have long known to be above such mundane considerations as the state of the wicket and the class of the bowling, but Woolley himself has never charmed more magical

runs from unwilling opponents than he did in the first unforgettable hour of this morning in June (Kilburn, *The Yorkshire Post*, June 4, 1935).

The likes of Sutcliffe, and Woolley, are characters used by Kilburn to symbolise his own ideals. It just so happened that Sutcliffe, during this particular period, was at the crease so often that it warranted Kilburn's continued descriptions of him, and, through Kilburn's extended periods of examining the batsman, it became apparent to him that Sutcliffe's demeanour was such that he could use it to portray what, to him, should be, not only the perfect batsman, but perfect symbol of what the wider society should be.

Of course, Sutcliffe's natural manner and batting style at the crease only went so far – Kilburn had to add some fictive elements to the batsman's actions so as to create a fully rounded character. For example, one of the main elements to Sutcliffe's 'personality' was that he was a man who was *always* in control. This is perhaps in rebellion to the changing world around Kilburn at the time – to him the ideal is one who has total hegemonic control over the situation at all times. The way that, in the extract describing Sutcliffe from *In Search of Cricket* (1937, pp54-57), he goes as far as to give his character a voice: 'This padding-up announces as clearly as spoken words: 'My dear bowler, you are wasting your time: I am proposing to make a century to-day and I am certainly not going to jeopardize my chances by feeling for anything outside the off-stump'' (p55) is a tactic which could not display a greater power over the bowler – the one variant which could cause concern to the ways of Sutcliffe at the crease.

Another constant in Sutcliffe's 'personality' is that of longevity. This control which Sutcliffe imparts upon the game, and upon his wicket, is a state in which the game simply stays for hours on end. It is as if Kilburn is symbolically putting a full-stop on the game's evolution: Sutcliffe is in, Sutcliffe is in charge, he is playing elegantly; let us just leave the game in this state, for it is the way which we like it. Kilburn is not only symbolically 'full-stopping' the state of the game he is watching, it is as if he is, through Sutcliffe, wishing for a 'stop' to modernity, a nostalgic cry for the world to stop this Americanisation and standardisation in culture and society.

Hence the hyperbolic tone to Sutcliffe's innings when he is at the crease: 'Beauty to beauty added Sutcliffe as he went his noble way: he leaned unhurriedly upon his off-drive and just so surely as the ball pitched short came a quick and eager hook to produce yet another of the boundaries that totalled 18 before his innings was over' (Kilburn, *The Yorkshire Post*, July 5, 1937). His off-drive is not just played 'unhurriedly', but he 'leans' upon it, as if it is not a physical action at all, more just a nonchalant, easy, almost boringly easy, shot. (Even

though, in cricket, the off-drive is one of the more difficult shots to play; a high-risk stroke which endangers the outside edge of the batsman, especially so given that cricket of this era was played on uncovered pitches, allowing for greater movement of the ball off the surface.)

Everything positive that Sutcliffe did seemed to be 'beautiful', or a variant of it, and the use of 'noble' brings with it royal connotations, similar to that of the language used to describe Woolley, who, like Sutcliffe, is one whose 'personality' features his 'control' over proceedings: 'Woolley, of course, we have long known to be above such mundane considerations as the state of the wicket and the class of the bowling' (Kilburn, *The Yorkshire Post*, June 4, 1935).

It is by using players such as Sutcliffe and Woolley – Kilburn did the same with others; Sutcliffe was simply used the most, and Woolley, given that Kilburn was restricted to writing about the Kent batsmen twice per year at county level and only in Test matches thereafter, with perhaps more intensity – that Kilburn did with individual player personality and characterisation that which Bateman suggests interwar cricket writers did via their portrayals of English cricket as a metonym for 'an unchanging place of Englishness' (2009, p93).

Inter-war cricket discourse was an element in a wider reconstruction of Englishness that promised to provide reconciliation between the ideological tensions of the period and the aesthetic. ... The village green rarely had to contend with the potentially destabilising power of the body, however. The problem of theorising the performative in cricket was faced by the professional cricket journalists of the time... The embodied performance of County and Test cricket thus became explicitly implicated into a discourse of cultural crisis (Bateman, 2009, p93).

Kilburn implicated interwar England's cultural crisis, or what he saw as a cultural crisis, through his characterisation, the fictive additions to player personality, but also via his choice of language depending on where in the country he was writing about cricket and what he thought the area's relationship was with wider English culture and society, and the crisis.

In his *A Last English Summer* (2010) Hamilton describes Headingley as 'a dowdy, mongrel of a place' (p232), and noted that Kilburn himself was, likewise, unimpressed with its lack of beauty – though in writing Kilburn was, as Hamilton described (2010, p232), 'delicate in describing its faults'. 'The touch of sentiment so strongly impressed upon other grounds,' Kilburn wrote, 'has seldom fallen significantly upon the Headingley atmosphere' (in Hamilton, 2010, p232). The year in which Kilburn penned these words is unclear, however, assuming they were written later in the century, his feelings towards Headingley, indeed, in

grounds which were of the 'urban' variety such as the Leeds stadium, Manchester's Old Trafford and Sheffield, are still evident in his interwar work.

Whereas the reports form cricket grounds with rural connotations, such as Kent, placed within the 'Garden of England', and Worcestershire, situated on the River Severn, surrounded by trees and with the overlooking Worcester Cathedral, carried in them wordplay often associated with all things 'beautiful', for example the above extract regarding Kent batsman Frank Woolley – this 'beautiful' discourse was also often associated with *players* of beauty, who heralded from these 'beautiful grounds', hence the 'beautiful discourse' regarding Woolley when the match itself was being played in Bradford – the reports from matches played at the likes of Leeds, Manchester, Sheffield (and often regarding players who Kilburn wanted to carry similar urban connotations) are more likely to have carried in them a more workmanlike word use.

In the examples of these more 'urban' cricket grounds, it is not so much *what* Kilburn writes, it is more what he *does not* write about them. As highlighted by Hamilton's (2010, p232) acknowledgment of Kilburn's 'delicacy' in describing Headingley's 'faults', he does not directly write of an urban cricket ground's ugliness or resemblance or symbolising of cultural crisis; he does so indirectly, subtly. For example, when Worcestershire travelled to play Yorkshire in Sheffield, Kilburn quasi-apologises on behalf of the Worcestershire batsmen, who were blown away by Bill Bowes taking eight wickets in an innings, by writing: 'Worcestershire's troubles began early, for at 6 [Harold] Gibbons, playing back with that untroubled mien which comes to those who have half their innings on Worcester's lovely wicket, edged a catch to Sutcliffe' (Kilburn, *The Yorkshire Post*, May 30, 1935) – it is merely a note that suggests how 'lovely' Worcester is in comparison to Sheffield. Or, similarly, in describing Yorkshire's 'production' of runs at Bradford (Kilburn, *The Yorkshire Post*, July 5, 1937), and 'production's' list of connotations involving factories, urbanity and the industrial revolution. Rather, it is more easily highlighted his love of the cricket grounds which symbolise what Bateman described as places that act 'as a microcosm of an ideal national culture, [which] could metonymically reproduce itself nationally and imperially as an unchanging place of Englishness' (2009, p93), along the lines of the ideals associated with the rural village green.

Kilburn describes the Kentish town of Tonbridge as for centuries having 'lain quietly dreaming in the enchanted garden of Kent' (Kilburn, 1937, p17). He writes that 'summer days are sweet and shining with peace in Tonbridge, and cricket week is the crown of the year' (Kilburn, 1937, p17). The 'calm' and 'control' 'personality' traits of the likes of Sutcliffe

and Woolley are transcended from the individual player to the object – the cricket ground and its surrounding features. 'Worcester is no place for hurry or discontented entry,' he writes of another favourite place, 'for it is by no means the least handsome of our older cities. ... The atmosphere of cathedrals the world over has a similarity of majesty and calm, and in the mighty monument of Worcester there is no lack of these abiding qualities' (p42). The quality of longevity is not left out either – Scarborough is 'always new but never changes. The daily business insists upon constant variety, yet the years have brought a stable mellowness' (p185).

Lord's, meanwhile, is saved for special consideration. London may be somewhat urban but it is not a city born out of the industrial revolution in the same way as, say, Sheffield, and if Kilburn's symbolising of the likes of Kent and Worcester as rural idylls, symbols of an 'unchanging place of Englishness' (Bateman, 2009, p93), are part of a wider want of a cricketing hegemony, then there needs to be a ground to symbolise the head of such an institution, and Lord's is chosen. The opening day of the second Test versus South Africa in 1935 was played at Lord's, and Kilburn describes the venue as having 'always an atmosphere of cricket dignity' (Kilburn, *The Yorkshire Post*, July 1, 1935). He uses his literary styles to evoke best the feeling that this place is the pinnacle; aesthetics are everything and he uses narrative luxury to the fullest extent in the opening to the piece, extracted below:

Lord's always has an atmosphere of cricket dignity, and to-day the sun shone from a sky of delicate blue and the breeze which ruffled the gleaming flannels of the players joined to make an unforgettable picture of this, the dearest of our games. All day long a pigeon fluttered or strolled in front of the pavilion, and when at the fall of Dalton's wicket, the players were presented to His Majesty the King, the occasion touched perfection (Kilburn, *The Yorkshire Post*, July 1, 1935).

This particular event could have been the absolutely perfect symbol of a cricketing ideal for Kilburn: the game being played at a venue of 'cricketing dignity', with His Majesty the King in attendance. Sutcliffe was also playing for England, however, for once he failed, making only three runs before being caught lbw, with England's total only five. Kilburn managed to brush past the issue – instead of blaming Sutcliffe for falling from his own high standards, he felt the need to implicate the umpire in a questionable decision – something which simply does not happen, perhaps only occurring here due to its spoiling an otherwise perfect cricketing analogy – by writing briefly: 'Sutcliffe was out leg before and to his evident surprise' (Kilburn, *The Yorkshire Post*, July 1, 1935). It is the risk one runs when imbuing one player with supernatural powers of symbolism, even if he was one of the game's all time greats.

Summary

This section of the study has taken the interwar writing of J.M. Kilburn for *The Yorkshire Post* and examined exactly how he uses individuals, specifically Herbert Sutcliffe, to portray to his readers his own societal ideals.

Firstly, however, early sporting celebrities of the twentieth century were analysed, to help give context to the way in which Kilburn uses Sutcliffe as an ideological cultural symbol, for, in doing so, Kilburn also creates something of a celebrity out of Sutcliffe, but in a totally different way to those sporting celebrities which preceded him.

For example, W.G. Grace was amongst the – if not *the* – first sporting celebrity. However, many of the reasons for the rise of Grace as a sporting celebrity are the antithesis of the reasons for Sutcliffe's celebrity, decades later. Grace was an extroverted gentleman cricketer, as famous for his flamboyant behaviour as he was for his statistical achievements on the cricket field (Birley, 1999, Whannel, 2002, Wright, 2004). Sutcliffe, on the other hand, was more introverted, a calm presence on the cricket field, and only notable for his achievements on it. Grace shot to fame as a personality in his own right whereas it was through the sheer volume of runs scored that Sutcliffe's name became household.

The manner in which he scored his thousands of first class runs lent himself to be used as an ideological symbol by Kilburn within his writing; a Grace-style character, despite, in Grace's case, scoring a similarly enormous number of runs in his career, would not do as an ideological symbol, for his personality was not in-keeping with the calmness and control as evidenced by Sutcliffe at the crease. An outlandish character for Kilburn would symbolise an erratic quality, consistent with the ever-changing state of society around him.

Players of this ilk had 'personality' traits added fictively to their 'character' on the cricket field, to the point where Kilburn players of symbolism were often imbued with 'noble' qualities of hyperbolic proportions, such as Frank Woolley, who 'charmed... magical runs from unwilling opponents' (Kilburn, June 4, 1935) and Sutcliffe, who were labelled with elegant terminology such as 'beautiful' and 'magical' to reinforce to the reader their ideological symbolism.

4.

'When we read that Hammond has made 170 in an innings of two hours' duration we do not picture it in figures, but in sweeping curves of flannels, brown arms and white bat and the ball making swift patterns across the grass.'

J.M. Kilburn, *In Search of Cricket*, 1937, p181

Conclusion: The Final Over

The evidence which has been gathered hitherto has lead to this study making the following, overall, conclusion regarding the cricket writing of J.M. Kilburn for *The Yorkshire Post* between 1934 and 1939: during this period, Kilburn does indeed transcend the boundary between what this study has defined as 'journalism' and what this study has defined as 'literature', however, rather than conforming to a 'complete' literary style, his interwar writing took the form of a journalism-literature 'hybrid'. Given the overwhelming evidence suggesting literary traits within his writing, coupled with the fact that his writing forgoes even some of the most basic journalistic principles and styles – to the point where the editors had to supplement his reports with an 'enlarged standfirst', or else print a publication whose cricket reports did not conform to the reasons of the newspaper's very existence – his writing, during this period in his career, did err on the side of 'literature'.

His writing can never truly be considered 'literature' fully, for, ultimately, his writing always carried with it some journalistic aspects, albeit a negligible amount at times. Being in a newspaper, his work is obviously not the sole piece of writing in the publication, which, in the newspaper overall, is undoubtedly journalistic. Also, regardless of whether he meant to or not – a point highlighted by Tunstall's (1970, p21) observation that even Shakespeare's

plays included some of them (in Harcup and O'Neill, 2001, p264) – his work did invariably cover some journalistic news values. Therefore, his writing will never be able to 'shake off' the fact that it has journalistic traits and is presented in a journalistic publication, even if his style suggests 'literature'.

A number of reasons can be sought for this want to write 'literature', and most of them are to do with the individual rather than a paradigm shift within the journalism industry. Kilburn himself grew up around books, and by all accounts had a very 'literary' upbringing. He was well-educated, completed a university degree and had dreams of becoming a 'writer', rather than a 'journalist'. He wrote when he went travelling in Finland, for example, and even sent some of this travel writing to Arthur Mann – then editor at *The Yorkshire Post* – who clearly knew of Kilburn's writing style before hiring him in 1934.

The key, however, seems to be that man: Neville Cardus. Bateman (2009, p95) notes how it was he, 'more than any other cricket writer', who 'has become a construct who transcends the fields of 'cricket Literature' and 'literature' to become a component of the national culture'; and it was he who impressed upon a young Kilburn, who had until that point 'never intended to be a cricket writer' (Kilburn, 1972, p17), the idea that it was indeed possible to write literarily about cricket – 'I had tasted Cardus,' wrote Kilburn in his *Thanks to Cricket* (1972), 'I had met him – in print, I mean – at precisely the right moment of romanticism in literary development' (pp17-18).

After outlining the careers of Kilburn, Cardus and Alfred Pullin – Kilburn's predecessor at *The Yorkshire Post* – the first section concerning the analysis of Kilburn's writing was that entitled 'A Writer in a Journalist's World', whereby, before any literary considerations were made, the interwar works of Kilburn were taken and broken down from a 'journalistic' viewpoint, that is, the section sought to explain why Kilburn's writing was '*not journalism*' before considering how it '*was literature*'.

This study found that his writing failed to conform to even some of the most basic journalistic principles – the 'news values' first outlined by academics in 1965 via Galtung and Ruge's study (Galtung and Ruge, 1965, Harcup and O'Neill, 2001, Harrison, 2006, Brighton and Foy, 2007) – and Harrison's (2006, pp57-58) observation, that with the early twentieth century's press evolution came the 'inverted pyramid style', made clear that 'news values' were very much a common aspect of journalism at the time of Kilburn's interwar writing for *The Yorkshire Post*. Given that he did not adhere to such principles – instead leaving his newspaper sub-editors, via the use of an 'enlarged standfirst' before each of his

pieces, to cater for the 'journalistic' elements of his writing – it could be argued that his writing was indeed 'not journalism' – certainly not to the extent that was found elsewhere in the industry (Williams, 1997, Harcup, 2004).

Of course, there were factors other than Cardus in the development of Kilburn's literary style: an accommodating editor in Arthur Mann, for example, and a social climate whose wider literature represented the era's cultural crisis, whereby writers took on a very active role within society (Hynes, 1976, Cunningham, 1988). Indeed, by all accounts, Kilburn's writing did evolve beyond this period. As he developed throughout his writing career, the journalism-literature pendulum evidently swung back towards 'journalism' ever so slightly. For example, in 1966, his report of the second day's play of the Test against the West Indies at Headingley featured no 'enlarged standfirst' at all. The design was much more in keeping with what we see today: a headline and sub-heading, then by-line and straight into the copy. Kilburn's first line even answers the 'W' questions. He wrote: 'The second day's cricket in the Headingley Test match carried the one simple theme of West Indies authority' (Kilburn, *The Yorkshire Post*, August 6, 1966). Whilst there was still room for elegance (he described an innings of 174 from Sobers by writing: 'Sobers did more than light the West Indian way to security. He paved it with gold and encrusted every signpost and landmark with gleaming jewels') that first line takes on the journalistic role which the 'enlarged standfirst' did for his 1930s writing, answering all of the 'Who? What? Where? When? Why? And How?' questions to some extent.

His tributes in Hamilton's *Sweet Summers* (2008) also recount a much more direct, authoritative writer, compared to the slightly more elegant version we see in the mid-to-late 1930s. Perhaps Matthew Engel, writing his tribute in *Sweet Summers* (in Hamilton, 2008, pp346-347), was on to something when he suggested that the work of Kilburn's early career brought with it a 'freshness' – a quality 'that could only come from a young writer'. It was perhaps also this freshness, this keenness, which was the catalyst for him to latch on to the likes of Herbert Sutcliffe as one of his main 'characters' in what would become a continual narrative that was the 1934-1939 period.

Kilburn held back nothing in building Sutcliffe's character on the written page. He committed fully to using a 'narrative luxury' – coming from Roland Barthes's 'reality effect' in descriptions (1992, pp134-141), whereby writers use what he calls 'notations' in describing scenes within their writing, though often include 'unjustifiable' notations; extra bits of detail whose absence would not otherwise affect the outcome of the story – and, as a consequence of doing so, created his own cricketing mythology, using characterisation to, in

the example of Sutcliffe, create a mythological, almost godlike figure. This kind of individuality in his writing brought to light, much in the same way as other literary figures of the era like, for example, James Joyce (Hynes, 1976), other social issues of the day, such as the encroaching Americanisation and standardisation into British culture that came with general modernity and lead, from a literary viewpoint, to the development of literary modernism for which Joyce, for example, was famous.

The 1930s, the interwar period of Kilburn's time writing for *The Yorkshire Post*, was a period of social and cultural instability, much like the rest of the interwar era (Taylor, 1965, Street, 2000, Bateman, 2009), where new social and cultural possibilities, thanks to a growth in globalisation, presented themselves. This to Kilburn, and other interwar cricket writers such as Cardus, who had been writing for well over a decade by this time, was causing a cultural standardisation, and this cultural transition did not represent a smooth evolution, creating a morally torn society; for example in the debate regarding the BBC's Sunday broadcasting policy which highlighted the rift between the younger, working class generation's desire to relax on a Sunday, and the older generation's want to adhere to a strict Lord's Day Observance (Street, 2000).

There seems a slight contradiction between Kilburn's cultural anxieties and the modernising world: whilst at the same time society was becoming morally torn and more fragmented – especially generationally and class-wise – it was the fear of standardisation through globalisation and Americanisation which was worse for Kilburn, and, incidentally, Cardus (Bateman, 2009). Hence Kilburn is very keen to, on at least a cricketing level, keep the country divided into specific, regional, cricketing cultures. This is where Bateman's (2009) observation that many interwar cricket writers shared similar cultural cricketing views is particularly precise, especially in the case of Kent – 'The Garden of England' – being an oasis of cricket ideals to the likes of Cardus and Kilburn.

For Kilburn, it is in Kent, and by Kent-produced players, where 'beauty' hails. The name 'Woolley' and 'beauty' are synonymous in Kilburn's writing, as well as Cardus's (Kilburn, 1937, *The Yorkshire Post 1934-1939*, Bateman 2009), whereas in places like Leeds, Manchester and Sheffield, industrial cities and representations of the modernising world, there is a different tone to Kilburn's words where only the exceptional players and, or, performances, hail praise. For example, when Wilf Barber scored an enormous 255 against Surrey at Sheffield in 1935, Kilburn described the player as 'more than a Yorkshire batsman of plain utility', writing that he 'put aside his workaday clothes and made high holiday in his Sunday best' (Kilburn, *The Yorkshire Post*, July 1935).

What is for certain, however, is that Kilburn was different. He was a literary man who had aspirations to become a writer and, inspired by the fluid prose of Neville Cardus, turned his attentions elsewhere. His natural style was to merge literature with journalism to create a literary-journalism hybrid. Quite simply, he took his literary mind and his fountain pen, and went in search of cricket.



Appendices

Appendix 1: Key articles

A list of the key research articles used in this study, written by J.M. Kilburn for *The Yorkshire Post* between 1934 and 1939.

Kilburn, J. (1934). "Australia's Ashes", in Kilburn, J. (1937). *In Search of Cricket*. London: Pavilion Books Ltd, and published in *The Yorkshire Post* on August 18, 1934 *

Kilburn, J. (1934). "Dreary play in Roses' match", *The Yorkshire Post*, August 6, 1934

Kilburn, J. (1934). "Brilliant Test feat by Bowes", *The Yorkshire Post*, July 21, 1934

Kilburn, J. (1935). "A Day and a Half", in Kilburn, J. (1937). *In Search of Cricket*. London: Pavilion Books Ltd, and published in *The Yorkshire Post* on August 1, 1935 **

Kilburn, J. (1935). "Yorkshire batting revel", *The Yorkshire Post*, July 8, 1935

Kilburn, J. (1935). "W.G. Grace feat beaten", *The Yorkshire Post*, July 6, 1935

Kilburn, J. (1935). "South Africans put out for 228", *The Yorkshire Post*, July 1, 1935

Kilburn, J. (1935). "South Africa make history", in Kilburn, J. (1937). *In Search of Cricket*. London: Pavilion Books Ltd, and published in *The Yorkshire Post* on June 29, 1935***

Kilburn, J. (1935). "Day of thrilling cricket", *The Yorkshire Post*, June 4, 1935

Kilburn, J. (1935). "The best of the season", in Kilburn, J. (1937). *In Search of Cricket*. London: Pavilion Books Ltd, and published in *The Yorkshire Post* on June 1, 1935 ****

Kilburn, J. (1935). "Bowes 8 wickets for 40", *The Yorkshire Post*, May 30, 1935

Kilburn, J. (1935). "Worcester routed at Sheffield", *The Yorkshire Post*, May 10, 1935

Kilburn, J. (1935). "A Hat in a Hundred", in Hamilton, D. (eds) (2008). *Sweet Summers: The Classic Cricket Writing of J.M. Kilburn*. Ilkley: Great Northern Books and Kilburn, J. (1937). *In Search of Cricket*. London: Pavilion Books Ltd

Kilburn, J. (1936). "England only 30 behind: Eight wickets left", *The Yorkshire Post*, July 27, 1936

Kilburn, J. (1936). "Harold Larwood: Fast Bowler Without Peer", *The Yorkshire Post*, July 15, 1936

Kilburn, J. (1936). "Three Yorkshire Centuries", *The Yorkshire Post*, July 6, 1936

Kilburn, J. (1937). "Hutton's amends against New Zealand", *The Yorkshire Post*, July 12, 1937

Kilburn, J. (1937). "Good start to Mitchell's benefit", *The Yorkshire Post*, July 5, 1937

Kilburn, J. (1938). "Cambridge players in Yorkshire team", *The Yorkshire Post*, July 16, 1938

Kilburn, J. (1938). "Good finish prospect spoiled by rain", *The Yorkshire Post*, July 6, 1938

Kilburn, J. (1938). "Masterful McCabe foils England", *The Yorkshire Post*, June 14, 1938

Kilburn, J. (1938). "Sutcliffe century gains souvenir", *The Yorkshire Post*, June 9, 1938

Kilburn, J. (1939). "An irritating day at Chesterfield", *The Yorkshire Post*, July 17, 1939

Kilburn, J. (1939). "Middlesex take upper hand at Bradford", *The Yorkshire Post*, July 11, 1939

There are pieces included in the above list which were also reprinted by Kilburn in his *In Search of Cricket*, after having appeared in *The Yorkshire Post*. He thanks the newspaper in the book for allowing him to reproduce them in an anthological format. Similarly, there are two pieces from the interwar years which Duncan Hamilton has included in his 2008 anthology devoted to Kilburn, *Sweet Summers*. Both pieces were originally written for *The Yorkshire Post*.

*This article was one of four separate reports from within *In Search of Cricket*, however only the first day's report was fully dated and titled, with the following days simply marked 'Monday', 'Tuesday' and 'Wednesday' (pp116-152).

**This article was one of two separate reports from within *In Search of Cricket*, however only the first day's report was fully dated and titled, with the following day simply marked 'Thursday' (pp166-177).

***This article was one of three separate reports from within *In Search of Cricket*, however only the first day's report was fully dated and titled, with the following days simply marked 'Monday' and 'Tuesday' (pp83-103)

****This article was one of two separate reports from within *In Search of Cricket*, however only the first day's report was fully dated and titled, with the following day's play simply marked 'Second Day' (pp21-33).

Appendix 2: Other articles

Whilst the first list represents the main collection of texts, written by J.M. Kilburn and used for deep textual analysis, the below list represents a wider reading of articles written by Kilburn, Sir Neville Cardus and his *Yorkshire Post* predecessor, Alfred Pullin. The list is in chronological order.

1890s

Pullin, A. (1895). "Cricket Notes", *Yorkshire Evening Post*, June 10, 1895

Pullin, A. (1899). "A stern contest at Headingley", *The Yorkshire Post*, June 30, 1899

Pullin, A. (1905). "Albert Trott and his swerve", *Yorkshire Evening Post*, June 2, 1905.

1920s

Pullin, A. (1921). "Yorkshire end season with victory", *Yorkshire Evening Post*, August 30, 1921

Cardus, N. (1923). "The Present Discontents", *Days in the Sun* (1948), in Agnew, J. (2013) (eds) (pp460-463). *Cricket: A Modern Anthology*. London: Blue Door

Pullin, A. (1925). "Robinson and Oldroyd add 102", *Yorkshire Evening Post*, August 18, 1925

Cardus, N. (1926). "Lancashire in 1926", in Green, B. (eds) (1985). *Wisden Anthology 1900-1940*. London: Guild Publishing

Pullin, A. (1926). "England batsmen open moderately in final Test match", *Yorkshire Evening Post*, August 14, 1926

Pullin, A. (1928). "Yorkshire batsmen falter after a splendid start", *Yorkshire Evening Post*, August 4, 1928

Pullin, A. (1928). "Old Ebor's Notebook: Finding a Test Captain", *Yorkshire Evening Post*, July 14, 1928

1930s

Pullin, A. (1930). "Surrey fight hard for runs", *Yorkshire Evening Post*, July 5, 1930

Kilburn, J. (1935). "The secret of Yorkshire's Success", *The Cricketer Winter Annual 1935* in Hamilton, D. (eds) (2008). *Sweet Summers: The Classic Cricket Writing of J.M. Kilburn*. Ilkley: Great Northern Books

Kilburn, J. (1938). "A Game to Remember", *The Cricketer*, August 1938 in Hamilton, D. (eds) (2008). *Sweet Summers: The Classic Cricket Writing of J.M. Kilburn*. Ilkley: Great Northern Books

Kilburn, J. (1938). "A Letter from the North", *The Cricketer*, July 1938 in Hamilton, D. (eds) (2008). *Sweet Summers: The Classic Cricket Writing of J.M. Kilburn*. Ilkley: Great Northern Books

1950s

Cardus, N. (1951). "Fifty Years of Lancashire Cricket", pp421-424 in Green, B (eds) (1985). *Wisden Anthology 1940-1963*. London: Guild Publishing

Cardus, N. (1952). "A Call for Culture", pp267-269 in Green, B (eds) (1985). *Wisden Anthology 1940-1963*. London: Guild Publishing

Cardus, N. (1956). "C.B. Fry", pp953-955 in Green, B (eds) (1985). *Wisden Anthology 1940-1963*. London: Guild Publishing

Cardus, N. (1958). "Charles Macartney and George Gunn", pp968-970, in Green, B (eds) (1985). *Wisden Anthology 1940-1963*. London: Guild Publishing

Cardus, N. (1958). "Denis Compton: The Cavalier", pp490-491 in Green, B (eds) (1985). *Wisden Anthology 1940-1963*. London: Guild Publishing

1960s

Cardus, N. (1960). "Hubert Preston", pp975-976 in Green, B (eds) (1985). *Wisden Anthology 1940-1963*. London: Guild Publishing

Cardus, N. (1962). "Ernest Tyldesley", pp983-984 in Green, B (eds) (1985). *Wisden Anthology 1940-1963*. London: Guild Publishing

Cardus, N. (1963). "Six Giants of the Wisden Century", pp267-269 in Green, B (eds) (1985). *Wisden Anthology 1940-1963*. London: Guild Publishing

Cardus, N. (1963). "Sir John Berry Hobbs", pp929-934, in Green, B (eds) (1984). *Wisden Anthology 1963-1982*. London: Guild Publishing

Cardus, N. (1965). "Tom Graveney – A Century of Centuries", pp486-488 in Green, B (eds) (1984). *Wisden Anthology 1963-1982*. London: Guild Publishing

Cardus, N. (1965). "Walter Reginald Hammond", pp925-929 in Green, B (eds) (1984). *Wisden Anthology 1963-1982*. London: Guild Publishing

Cardus, N. (1966). "Sobers – The Lion of Cricket", pp109-112 in Green, B (eds) (1984). *Wisden Anthology 1963-1982*. London: Guild Publishing

Kilburn, J. (1966). "Brilliant innings by Sobers", *The Yorkshire Post*, August 6, 1966

Cardus, N. (1967). "Sydney Francis Barnes", pp895-898 in Green, B (eds) (1984). *Wisden Anthology 1963-1982*. London: Guild Publishing

Cardus, N. (1969). "J.B. Statham – Gentleman George: Sometimes he bowled too superbly", pp327-329 in Green, B (eds) (1984). *Wisden Anthology 1963-1982*. London: Guild Publishing

Cardus, N. (1969). "Emmott Robinson", pp950-953 in Green, B (eds) (1984). *Wisden Anthology 1963-1982*. London: Guild Publishing

1970s

Cardus, N. (1970). "Herbert Strudwick", pp958-960 in Green, B (eds) (1984). *Wisden Anthology 1963-1982*. London: Guild Publishing

Cardus, N. (1971). "Percy Holmes", pp934-937 in Green, B (eds) (1984). *Wisden Anthology 1963-1982*. London: Guild Publishing

Cardus, N. (1973). "Wilfred Rhodes", pp947-949 in Green, B (eds) (1984). *Wisden Anthology 1963-1982*. London: Guild Publishing

Cardus, N. (1973). "Jack Gregory", pp 922-923 in Green, B (eds) (1984). *Wisden Anthology 1963-1982*. London: Guild Publishing

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